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Iran paid $25m. for nuclear weapons, documents show

By STEVE RODAN

Iran paid $25 million for what appears to have been two tactical atomic weapons smuggled out of the former Soviet Union in a highly classified operation aided by technicians from Argentina, according to Iranian government documents marked top secret and obtained by *The Jerusalem Post*.

The documents, which have been in US government hands for several years and are currently being studied by Israel, contain correspondence between Iranian intelligence officials and those working on Teheran's nuclear program in 1991-92. They discuss Iranian efforts to obtain what turned out to be, in some cases, faulty nuclear weapons and supplies from the former Soviet Union, as well as complaints regarding what the documents term incompetent technicians from Argentina.

The documents were delivered by an exiled Iranian scientist to Labor MK Rafi Elul.

Elul last night confirmed that he received the documents. "This is correct," he said. "But I cannot say anything more at this time."

In a document dated December 26, 1991, Brig.-Gen. Rahim Safavi, deputy commander of the Revolutionary Guards Council, discusses a meeting with Dr. Riza Amrullahi, Iran's vice president and head of its Atomic Energy Commission.

Amrullahi, Safavi reports, said the "efforts of the Islamic Republic's intelligence forces, which lasted 24 hours a day, have borne fruit and two tactical atomic weapons from Russia have been delivered to Iranian sources in the Astara region.

"The source added that they paid $25 millions for these weapons of a tactical nature."

The relay of this information prompted a stern reaction from Iranian security authorities. In a handwritten message at the bottom of the document, an Iranian intelligence official identified as Issa Pour writes, "Tell engineer Amir Amruhalli that it is forbidden to discuss this subject even with brothers of high rank, for such a discussion could only endanger the interests of the Islamic Republic."

But several weeks later, the documents say, Iran encountered problems with the newly arrived nuclear warheads.

See IRAN, Page 22

Selling *hametz*
Chief Rabbis Eliahu Bakshi-Doron (center) and Yisrael Lau sell the nation's *hametz* yesterday to Hussein Jabber from Abu Gosh. Story, Page 22 (Brian Hendler)

Currency reform plan unveiled

By DAVID HARRIS

Israelis will be allowed to make domestic property purchases in foreign currency if Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu and Finance Minister Yaakov Neeman approve the Bank of Israel's proposals for the liberalization of foreign exchange controls.

But there has been concern recently within the central bank that Netanyahu might not go ahead with the planned changes, particularly following this week's devaluation of the shekel.

Analysts last night suggested details of the proposals were leaked to calm the markets.

Senior central bank sources last night confirmed some of the key measures Governor Jacob Frenkel submitted to Netanyahu and Neeman:

• Citizens will be able to hold foreign currency here, without any restrictions.

• Israelis will be permitted to open accounts abroad and transfer cash overseas in either shekels or foreign currency.

• Individuals will be able to purchase apartments in Israel in dollars.

• Investments in assets abroad will be unlimited.

• There will be no restriction on the use of credit cards abroad.

• In certain emergency cases, the few remaining restrictions will also be lifted.

The increased hype surrounding the final steps in turning the shekel into a fully convertible currency is attributed to the fact that the announcement is scheduled before the 50th Independence Day.

However, Netanyahu, Neeman, and Frenkel have all called for public calm in recent days.

This followed a topsy-turvy week in currency trading, with the shekel depreciating as much as 1.82 percent in a single day, as rumors spread about the likely contents of the report. The shekel ended the week at NIS 3.692 against the dollar.

The key restrictions that will remain in place will affect institutional investors.

See CURRENCY, Page 12

Britain confident of N. Irish peace deal

News agencies

BELFAST – Toiling in a pressure-cooker environment, negotiators on Northern Ireland's future traveled further down the road to compromise yesterday, but faced the likelihood of working overtime.

Britain had hoped that the feuding parties would reach a peace deal by midnight, but said that obstacles were still blocking the way.

Prime Minister Tony Blair held an intense round of talks with rival parties late last night, his spokesman said.

Blair and his Irish counterpart, Bertie Ahern, were working flat out with Protestant and Catholic parties to bridge gaps on key issues.

See IRISH, Page 12

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Eilat	6:43 p.m.	7:42 p.m.

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NEWS in brief

Three killed, two hurt in single accident

Dr. Aharon Elyon and his wife, Betty, both 79, of Kibbutz Gesher Haziv, were killed last night when the car driven by their grandson collided head-on with a second car, whose driver was also killed, in the Beduin village of Beit Zarzir in the Jezreel Valley. Two persons were injured in the crash, one of them moderately. *Itim*

Clinton asked to commute Pollard's sentence

The full spectrum of the American Jewish religious leadership yesterday made a joint appeal to President Bill Clinton to commute the sentence of convicted spy Jonathan Pollard, appealing to him to "act with righteousness and divine grace to right this wrong."

In a rare display of unity, the heads of the American Orthodox, Conservative, and Reform rabbis and synagogues said in a letter to Clinton that they did not condone violations of American law, and they did not contend that Pollard was innocent of the charges for which he is serving a life sentence in a federal prison in North Carolina. However, the sentence of the former naval intelligence analyst was "grossly disproportionate," they said. *Marilyn Henry*

Peace Now protesters attacked by right-winger

Several young Peace Now demonstrators, protesting the government's Hebron policy at the entrance to Jerusalem yesterday, were attacked by a young man, who cursed them and tore their placards. Peace Now spokeswoman Hagit Ya'ari said that another group of protesters had stones thrown at them in Zion Square. *Itim*

30 Ethiopian immigrant families move to Ofra

Symbolizing the holiday of freedom, 30 Jewish families from Ethiopia will spend their first Seder in Israel at the absorption center in Ofra. They were taken directly to the settlement last night after landing at Ben-Gurion Airport. Aharon Domb, director-general of the Council of Jewish Communities in Judea, Samaria and Gaza, said that three local councils in the West Bank had agreed to house 120 families from Ethiopia expected in the coming weeks. Some will also be housed in the Kedumim and Efrat settlements. *Margot Dudkevitch*

Japan to boost funding for Palestinian projects

Japan intends to bolster the peace process by encouraging its investors to fund new projects to help the Palestinian Authority's economy, as well as that of surrounding Arab states.

Ambassador Yotaka Kawashima told Foreign Ministry Director-General Eytan Bentsur yesterday that the Japanese approach is exemplified by its funding the reconstruction of the Allenby and Sheikh Hussein Bridges across the Jordan River. Kawashima told Bentsur that Japan intends to finance additional projects within the framework of the interim agreement's "people-to-people" subcommittee, which is chaired by Bentsur *Jay Bushinsky*

Hamas leader Rantisi held by PA

By STEVE RODAN and MOHAMMED NAJIB

The Palestinian Authority last night arrested Hamas leader Abdel Aziz Rantisi in connection with his accusations that the PA was involved in the killing of bombmaker Muhi Sharif.

It was the second time in a week that Rantisi was taken into custody by PA security forces amid a continued exchange of accusations between Hamas and the PA regarding Sharif's death.

Rantisi has charged that Hamas members in detention were forced to confess to killing Sharif, the 32-year-old electrical engineer who was blamed for rigging bombs that killed 73 Israelis.

The arrest came hours after the release of a videotape of a man who claimed to be Hamas bombmaker Adel Awadallah, number two on Israel's wanted list.

Awadallah accused Palestinian Preventive Security Apparatus chief Jibril Rajoub of hounding Hamas activists and said he had warned Rajoub to stop.

PA security officials again changed details of their version of Sharif's death. Their latest assertion is that Sharif was suspected of collaborating with Israel by relaying to the General Security Services the location of Hamas bomb factories in Bethlehem, Ramallah and Nablus.

PA secretary-general Tayeb Abdul Rahim denied Hamas charges that security forces tortured Islamic activists to obtain a confession. He said that several Hamas leaders were permitted to hear the confessions of Hamas suspects for themselves.

Abdul Rahim said the suspects sent a written confession to Hamas leaders, detailing the slaying of Sharif. He said that the suspects would soon stand trial in open court.

But Hamas leaders said only one detainee, Ghassan Adassi, confessed to participating in the killing. They said, however that, Adassi refused to repeat his confession to the visiting Hamas leaders. Instead, Adassi told Hamas leaders that he was tortured.

When one visitor, Mahmoud Maslah, confronted Rajoub, he was dragged away and thrown into solitary confinement, Hamas reported last night in its Internet site.

A Hamas representative said on March 29, the night of Sharif's death in a garage explosion on the outskirts of Ramallah, Adassi was arrested and given a written confession. After a week of torture, he said, Adassi signed.

"Hamas condemns the unethical and anti-nationalistic methods," the organization said in a statement. "Hamas believes that the continued forgery of evidence and baseless claims point to a turning point in the ways of the Palestinian Authority and its treatment of the Palestinian people."

Other released Hamas detainees claimed they were beaten as well as part of the PA investigation. "They threw a chair at me," said Adassi's brother Sufia, one of those arrested.

Rajoub's agency summoned Issam Adassi to its Ramallah office and questioned him for 90 minutes about his whereabouts on March 29, the day Sharif was killed.

Palestinian Legislative Council member Hatem Abdul Khader has called for the PLC to intervene and review the entire episode. He has also called for dismantling of the PA investigation committee, headed by Abdul Rahim, and to annul its findings.

"We have to establish an objective investigatory committee," he said.

No holiday closure for territories

By ARIEH O'SULLIVAN

Under strong pressure from top IDF commanders and despite increasing assessments that Hamas plans to carry out an attack, the army has decided not to impose a closure on the territories during Pessah.

Senior military sources assess that the chance of an attack will grow on Sunday, when the Id al-Adha holiday ends. But the sources said they do not have "specific" warnings of an attack.

IDF and police units will remain on high alert throughout the week-long holiday, and hundreds of troops have been deployed at popular local tourist sites. These include Wadi Kelt, Auja, Sebastia, Hebron, and other Jewish settlements in Judea and Samaria.

At a top-level discussion, the army considered imposing a closure on the territories as in previous years, but senior generals strongly opposed the move.

"We decided as a policy that we would allow the continued movement of people as in the past few months," said Maj.-Gen. Ya'acov Orr, coordinator of activities in the territories. "I hope we don't run into grave situations where we'll have to start imposing restrictions...

"The information on the intended attacks, including the declarations made by Hamas, are of course being taken very seriously by security officials," he added.

As part of the security precautions, the IDF has made sure there are clear signs posted in the Gaza Strip directing the way to Gush Katif, where thousands of visitors are expected over the holiday.

Orr said any bombing would lead to closures and set back all the efforts his office had made to enhance the livelihood of the Palestinians. But even if there is a bombing or an attack, Orr said, his office has already selected thousands of Palestinian laborers who would be allowed to return to work immediately.

The number of Palestinian laborers working in Israel and permits given to Palestinian merchants is approaching its highest level in three years, Orr said. He also painted a rosy picture of increased investments in the territories, but did not give figures.

Palestinian officer remanded

Amar Zaban (center), a Palestinian police officer, is one of three Palestinians remanded yesterday by the military court in Beit El on suspicion of involvement in bombings. Zaban is accused of assisting in the suicide attacks last year in Mahane Yehuda and Rehov Ben-Yehuda. He allegedly drove the bombers to the attack sites and also detonated a bomb in Nablus last July that wounded two border policemen. (Text: Margot Dudkevich; Photo: Brian Hendler)

Winning Numbers

In yesterday's weekly Payis Hazak drawing, ticket number 693194 won NIS 1.5 million, while ticket number 449426 won the car.

Tickets 568251, 800714, 280222, 095557, 886420, 673419, 124066 and 638033 won NIS 5,000. Tickets ending in 41753, 51631, 65854, 76062, 44775, 99564, 53318, 21225, 14203, 01656, 55153, 57805, 23905, 52484, 47703, 16102, 21015, 77141 and 35164 won NIS 1,000. Tickets ending in 999, 572, 405, and 489 won NIS 100. Tickets ending in 42 34, 89 and 74 won NIS 30.

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Milo booed at Likud's Pessah toast

By SARAH HONIG

Tel Aviv Mayor Ronni Milo was loudly heckled at the Likud's Pessah toast for party activists last night. The unfriendly greeting was the only excitement in the round of such ceremonies in most of the parties.

Milo is yet to formally announce whether he will run on a Likud ticket in the November municipal elections. Labor has already declined to challenge him.

But if Milo is unsure about his party, Likud activists demonstrated to Milo just how unpopular he is among the rank and file. He was greeted with catcalls from the minute he entered Likud headquarters and things only got worse when he took the rostrum.

He used the chance to admonish those who persisted in interrupting him, saying that "the Likud was always a movement of tolerance and free speech and expression. So it will continue to be. If you, however, insist on muzzling members, this party will shrink to a 10-MK faction."

Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu also attended, but spoke only briefly of his government having to labor despite a hostile press and opposition.

Communications Minister Limor Livnat was greeted warmly when she lamented that "too many in this country forget what we are all about. We are not a state of all its citizens. This country was founded as a Jewish state for the Jewish people. As a Jewish state, we are also careful about granting equal right to minorities, but this is the home of the Jewish people – their one and only home."

Two cabinet hopefuls were present – Knesset faction chairman Meir Sheetrit and presidential also-ran Shaul Amor. Sources close to Netanyahu were careful to stress that "for the foreseeable future there will be no further portfolio allocations."

Also on hand was Avigdor Lieberman, former director-general of the Prime Minister's Office, who was greeted with loud applause despite the recent attacks against him by Science Minister Michael Eitan. Eitan charges that Lieberman still pulls the strings behind the scenes of the Likud's Tel Hai Fund, which controls the party's assets.

In Labor, the Pessah toast was uneventful as party chairman Ehud Barak told the gathering that "the eyes of the nation are fixed upon us. Millions of citizens are looking to us with great expectations, hoping that we will mount a credible alternative to the government."

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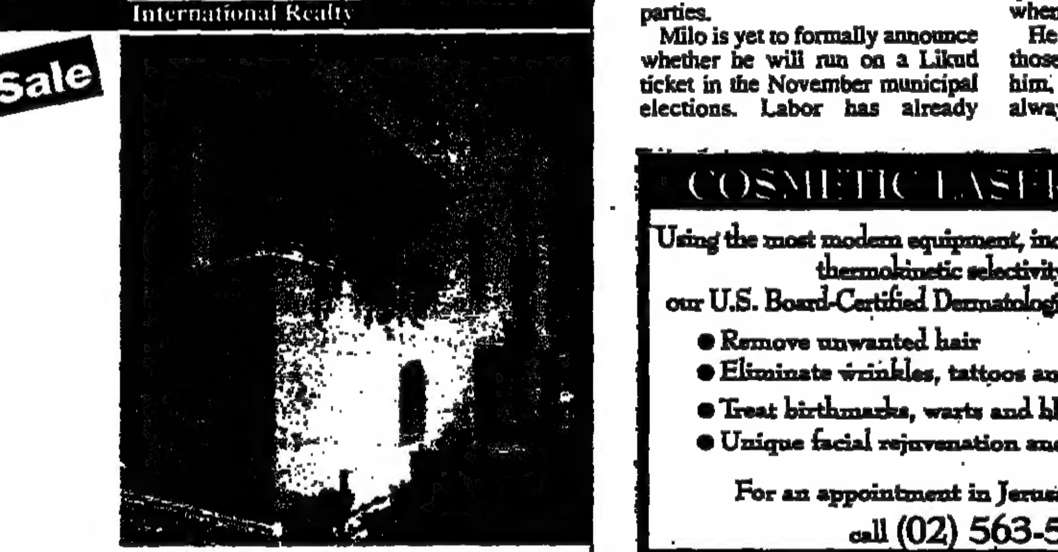

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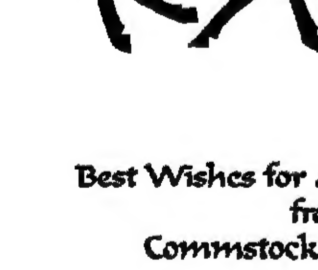

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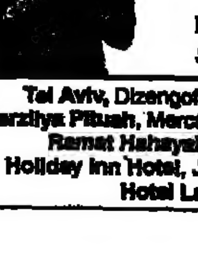

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Boat sinks, damages Eilat coral reef

By LIAT COLLINS

It could take more than a century for part of the coral reef off Eilat to recover from the damage it sustained yesterday afternoon when it was struck by an excursion boat.

The 52 passengers and four crew members were rescued by navy and police vessels before the boat sank, some 200 meters from the Taba border crossing.

"It is a disaster. The damage is huge and it will take possibly more than a century for the coral to reach the state it was before," said Noam Meshi, manager of the Coral Nature Reserve, a protected site belonging to the Nature Reserves and National Parks Authority.

He noted that this is one of the virgin stretches of the reef where the living corals are particularly beautiful. Other experts have defined the damage as "inestimable and irreparable."

Although a full assessment of the damage cannot be made until the boat is raised from the seabed and removed, the size of the area hit and the quantities of coral which floated away after being broken off indicate the collision was a catastrophe.

The authority has begun an inquiry and according to spokesman Ofer Greenstein, the initial impression is that the accident was caused by negligence.

The boat, *Jadran*, was apparently swept towards the reef by strong winds. At a distance of about 10 meters from the shore the boat hit the reef with great force. It sank about an hour later in clear view of people on the beach.

Naval officials said that the moment a distress signal from the ship reached them two patrol ships and rubber speed boats were dispatched to the site, opposite the Princess Hotel just north of the Egyptian border. Civilian boats also participated in the rescue.

Meshi said the broken corals were gathered up, filling several containers. Nature Reserve and National Park Authority specialists are examining the possibility of trying to graft them back onto the reef.

According to Greenstein, initial reports indicate that the tourist boat had been tied to a buoy, but the captain did not notice in time that the ship had broken away and was being carried by a northerly wind towards the reef. The boat had apparently been moored so that passengers could dive and swim.

Regulations require a full watch while the boat is anchored to prevent it coming unmoored or dragged away unnoticed.

Meshi said the fact that the reef is a popular tourist site could also affect the time the reef takes to recover although he hopes to find an arrangement to limit the impact.

According to Meshi, *Jadran* used to be the pleasure boat of the late Yugoslavian leader Marshall Tito. It was brought to Israel 15 years ago to serve as a tour boat.

Arieh O'Sullivan contributed to this report.

President Ezer Weizman speaks to Mahmoud Abu Razi (right), whose home in the Beduin village of Umm al-Sahali was destroyed last week, as MK Abdul Wahab Darawshe (seated, center) looks on yesterday. (Israel Sun)

Weizman visits Umm al-Sahali

By DAVID RUDGE

President Ezer Weizman yesterday visited the Galilee Beduin community near Shfaram where three illegal homes were demolished last Thursday, despite coming under pressure to cancel.

"I did not come here to justify violence, let that be clear. I came here despite the fact that there was violence and there were those who advised me not to come at all because there had been violence," said Weizman.

"But because the subject is so basic, I decided to come, as well as to wish everybody, first and foremost, a happy [Id al-Adha] holiday."

The demolition of the homes in Umm al-Sahali sparked riots late on Saturday night, after police tried to prevent the reconstruction of the houses.

Weizman pledged to assist in trying to resolve the problem of illegal building and unrecognized villages in the Arab sector.

"I hope we will all try, with MKs, with the authorities, and I will help as much as I can, to resolve the problem in Umm al-Sahali and other places in the country where there are problems, because this is not the only place," said Weizman.

He was given a warm welcome by hundreds of people, including Arab MKs, council heads, residents of Shfaram, and members of the Beduin community.

Ibrahim Nimr Hussein, chairman of the monitoring committee of the Israeli-Arab leadership, presented Weizman with a report outlining the problem at Umm al-Sahali in particular, and the Arab sector in general.

Northern communities reject idea of unilateral IDF pullout

By DAVID RUDGE

The forum of Heads of Confrontation Line Communities in the North has rejected the idea of any unilateral withdrawal from Lebanon.

Forum chairman Shlomo Buhbut said that council leaders at a recent meeting were united in their opposition to any IDF pullout which did not include security guarantees.

"If an arrangement is reached that would guarantee the security of the North and the safety of our allies, the South Lebanese Army and their families, we would welcome it," said Buhbut, who is also mayor of Ma'alot-Tarshiha.

"We oppose any form of unilateral withdrawal, however, because we fear this would turn the clock back to the days of terrorist infiltration attacks such as the Ma'alot massacre," he said.

The forum is seeking clarifications from Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu and Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai of the government's decision to adopt UN Security Council Resolution 425.

A meeting between Mordechai and forum members has been scheduled for Sunday.

The AP adds:

Arab League secretary-general Esmat Abdel-Meguid yesterday called the offer to withdraw the IDF from Lebanon "a maneuver and an attempt to drive a wedge between Lebanon and Syria."

He urged, after a meeting with Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri, that the pullout be done unconditionally.

Court orders state to explain student housing policy

By BATSHEVA TSUR

The government must explain within 30 days what its criteria are for granting cheap public housing, the High Court of Justice ruled yesterday.

The court issued an interim injunction to this effect following separate petitions from MK Eitan Cabel (Labor) and MKs Yossi Sarid and Ran Cohen (Meretz), who charged that the Housing Ministry's criteria discriminated in favor of haredi yeshiva students and against university students.

In his petition, Cabel said that according to new ministry criteria, only students who are disabled or who have "exhausted all possibilities of finding work" are entitled to rental housing. This specifically covers full-time yeshiva students and supposedly certain other students, the petitions said.

But, as far as non-yeshiva students are concerned, the criteria provide a "mere fig leaf," the petition says. In order for other students to be granted the housing rights, they must be married "with seven siblings." In addition, the rental housing is in haredi neighborhoods that are far from universities.

Court President Aharon Barak, who headed the three-member bench, asked Uzi Fogelman of the State Attorney's Office if he was prepared to discuss the issue as if an interim injunction had already been issued. When Fogelman responded in the negative, the court noted the complexity of the matter and gave the state 30 days to respond.

"If the new ministry criteria are accepted, haredim will be able to live off the rest of the country from A to Z," Cabel said later.

The only way to get haredi men to work, he said, is to make them pay for housing. "There are 650 housing units currently going up and they are all meant for haredim. Other students do not meet these criteria. Which student is married with seven siblings and does not work?"

Cohen, who has also introduced a bill that would permit those living in public housing to buy their apartments, said the Housing Ministry is opposing the bill because it would like the rental tenants to die off so it can give their apartments to haredim.

NEWS *in brief*

Embassy in Latvia hit by bomb scare

The Israeli Embassy in Latvia was hit by a bomb scare yesterday, but a police search found no explosive device, the Baltic News Service said. The apparent hoax telephone call came a week after a synagogue was bombed in Riga's historic Old Town, damaging doors and smashing windows, and days after a mine blew up near the Russian embassy. No one claimed responsibility for either attack and police in the Baltic state launched an all-out investigation. *Reuters*

Police fear for life of missing woman

Fears for the life of Sima Mazayed, 30, who disappeared from her home in Jerusalem's Katamonim section late Saturday night, are growing. Mazayed, who had converted to Islam and married an Arab, then moved to western Jerusalem while in the process of getting a divorce, put her children to bed on Saturday night. She then left the house and disappeared. Police think she may have been kidnapped and taken to an area controlled by the Palestinian Authority. Police have asked the Palestinian Police to assist in finding her. She had recently filed several complaints with the police about her ex-husband Wahel, but the police has determined that he played no role in her disappearance. *Itim*

Khader indicted for Hezi Koka slaying

Juma Khader was indicted yesterday by Jerusalem District Court for the murder of television technician Hezi Koka and the attempted murder of David Orenstein. The court is to rule on whether to keep Khader in custody through his trial. Prosecutors have argued that Khader, who lives in Ramallah, is a flight risk.

Khader allegedly stabbed Koka many times on a January morning after demanding that he hand over all his money. The two had spent the night together after meeting in a park in Jerusalem. *Itim*

Eitan: Israel ignore Syrian earthworks in Golan

Agriculture Minister Rafael Eitan said yesterday that Israel could not afford to be complacent about recent earthwork done on the Syrian side of the Golan Heights. He added that the government should not be too hasty in accepting Syria's explanation that it was part of agricultural work. In an interview with Israel Radio Eitan also said "We should not think, however, that we are on the brink of a war." *David Rudge*

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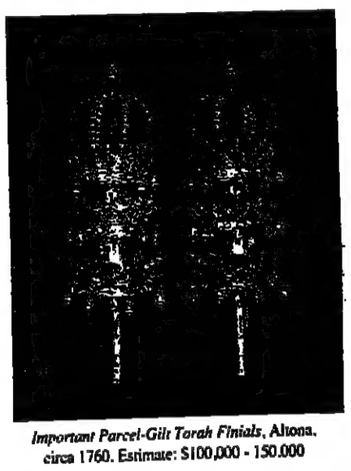

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IDF gets first Christian woman officer

By ARIEH O'SULLIVAN

An Arab Christian woman received her second-lieutenant's bars yesterday.

Caroline Kharman is the first Christian woman to become an officer in the IDF. And it didn't come easy. She grew up in the mostly Druse village of Usfiya on the Carmel and is the only woman in her village to join the army.

Speaking just before final marching drills, she said she enlisted because she felt Arab Israelis deserve to be treated like any other citizens of the state.

"I feel I can't fight for my rights without fulfilling my obligations," said the petite 21-year-old, a gold cross dangling from around her neck. "It's my moral duty to serve my country.

"I am an Israeli citizen and everyone, including those in the Arab community, want rights, but when it comes down to it, they don't fulfill their obligations."

Kharman was the only female officer candidate among 13 males at the IDF's graduation ceremony for coordination and liaison officers at Tzrifin.

"I said would succeed. I wanted to succeed, and I did succeed," said the headstrong young woman who fought for a year to be drafted.

Next week she will get her new assignment, but her commanders said Kharman, who they describe as a real fireball, would be stationed at the Erez crossing in the Gaza Strip where tens of thousands of Palestinians pass daily.

"I live in an Arab environment and I think I'll be able to connect with them better," she said.

Asked if she is prepared to defend Israel against Palestinians, if necessary, Kharman replied, "I have no problem with this. I think it's possible to protect Israel's interests while giving respect to the Palestinians."

She said her decision to enlist was initially opposed by both her family and the army.

"It was my dream to join the army," said Kharman. "Most of my classmates are all married and mothers.".

It then took a year-long battle with the authorities, who finally relented and allowed her to be drafted.

"The army had a problem with me in the beginning. They said I had no chance to get in. But I sent letters to the chief of general staff, the defense minister, and the president and was accepted a month later," she said.

She said her mother and brother insisted that, in the Arab community, "it was unacceptable for a woman to be out of the house a lot and among men."

But with the support of her father, an army veteran, Kharman was drafted in November 1996.

"My brother wanted to enlist, but my mother didn't let him. He's the only son among five sisters and, among Arabs, he has to be protected. Today he's an engineer. And he's proud of me today."

Kharman's uncle, Adib, said there were some in the village who gave her a hard time, not for joining the army, but for being a woman and joining the army. He said that because of his niece, two more girls from Usfiya are joining the IDF soon.

Kharman had served for over a year in the Home Front Command in Nazareth, when she was recruited to join the office of the coordinator of activities in the territories. She transferred – and signed up for the officers training course. She then had to repeat a grueling security check and anxiously waited for an answer as the date for the course to begin approached. She was given the OK just a few days beforehand, she said.

Kharman said she plans to make a career out of the IDF.

"I think all Israeli Arabs should serve in the army," she said. "It's good for the army. It's good for us. I hope a lot will want to join. I know they are scared, but they should put their fear aside."

Sec.-Lt. Yossi Rehavi Levy, who immigrated from Brooklyn and also completed the officers course yesterday, said Kharman coached him on his Arabic to help him get through.

"When I heard her name was Caroline, I said to her: 'That doesn't sound like a Jewish name.'" he said. "Then Caroline shocked me and said: 'I know. It's not.'"

Caroline Kharman graduates from officer training school yesterday. (Yael Somekh/Israel Sun)

2nd Druse promoted to general

By ARIEH O'SULLIVAN

Col. Amal Assad, deputy commander of IDF forces in Lebanon, was promoted to brigadier-general yesterday and put in charge of coordinating security with the Palestinian forces. He becomes the second Druse to reach this rank.

He takes over from Brig.-Gen. Herzl Gedj, who has been director of the Joint Security Coordination and Cooperation Committee since the Oslo Accords were implemented three years ago.

"I'm very happy to be a brigadier-general. I'd be happier to have been the 10th [Druse general]. I hope there will be more and higher ranking than brigadier," said Assad, a resident of Usfiya.

The other Druse general is Brig.-Gen. Yusef Mishlav, who two weeks ago took over as deputy coordinator of activities in the territories.

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Reform rabbi: Attacks are attempt to discredit me

By HAIM SHAPIRO

Rabbi Uri Regev, director of the Reform Movement's Israel Religious Action Center and the movement's representative on the Neeman Committee on conversion, yesterday lashed out at what he said appeared to be an attempt to besmirch him personally in an attempt to discredit the position of the liberal movements in the conversion dispute.

The Reform and Conservative say that the government is trying to act as if the recommendations of the Neeman Committee have been accepted, but they maintain that since the members of the committee never signed the report, there are no recommendations. They say they cannot accept the clause which stipulates that the Chief Rabbinate is to be the sole arbiter of the validity of conversions as long at it does not accept the other key clauses – that there is to be cooperation and dialogue between the religious streams, that it agree to a joint conversion institute, and that it agree to a lenient approach to conversion, "in the spirit of the School of Hillel."

Yesterday, Finance Minister Yaakov Neeman criticized Regev for taking this position in a meeting with Attorney-General Elyakim Rubinstein on Wednesday.

According to Regev, at the meeting, he and Rabbi Ehud Bandel, president of Israel's Conservative movement and its representative on the Neeman Committee, had only repeated what they have been saying for weeks in the media, that they will not withdraw their petitions to the High Court of Justice to recognize Reform and Conservative conversions carried out in Israel. Regev said that contrary to the impression conveyed by Neeman, the meeting had been friendly, and he and Bandel had actually praised the government for its efforts.

He added that this was not the first such attack. Last week a US Jewish newspaper quoted an anonymous senior government official as saying that Regev and Bandel are members of Meretz who are interested in bringing down the government because of the peace process.

"I am not and have never been a member of any political party," Regev said.

Regev added that he had no doubt that Neeman would try to convene the board of directors of a projected joint conversion institute before April 20, when the government is due to present its reply to one of the petitions.

Regev noted that a Knesset session on the Neeman Committee report, which was to have taken place on February 24, was moved up to February 23. The Knesset voted to approve the recommendations and its action was presented to the High Court the next day to back up a government request to delay the proceedings.

As of yesterday, there was still no announcement of a board meeting, but Bobby Brown, the prime minister's adviser on Diaspora affairs, said that he hoped to convene a meeting as soon as possible, although he did not want to specifically relate to April 20. Like the Neeman Committee, the board is to have five Orthodox members and one Reform and one Conservative member.

MK Amnon Rubinstein (Meretz) said yesterday that Meretz had seen the Neeman Committee recommendations as the lesser of two evils and had convinced the Conservative and Reform to accept them, but added that the recommendations have no real validity without the agreement of the Chief Rabbinate. He said the compromise is one unit which has to be accepted by all sides, and it is unthinkable for the Chief Rabbinical Council to reject the very important clause calling for a joint conversion institute.

Committee to process Holocaust insurance claims

By TOM TUGEND

LOS ANGELES – An international commission to oversee the speedy processing of insurance claims by families of Holocaust victims and survivors has been established by insurance regulators of America's two biggest states, four major European insurance companies, and Jewish organizations.

The agreement, described by participants as a "historic breakthrough," was signed Wednesday in the office of New York State Insurance Superintendent Neil Levin, and announced by Levin and California Insurance Commissioner Chuck Quackenbush.

Other signatories are the Allianz (Germany), Generali (Italy), AXA (France) and Zurich (Switzerland) insurance companies, and representatives of the World Jewish Restitution Organization, World Jewish Congress and the Claims Conference on Material Claims Against Germany.

Main points of the Memorandum of Intent are:

• Establishment of an international commission, originally proposed by Sen. Alfonse D'Amato (R-NY), to include the original signatories and other interested parties.

• The commission will have investigatory powers and set up a mechanism to resolve conflicts between claimants and insurers.

• Establishment of a fund to underwrite the commission's work and provide humanitarian relief to families of Holocaust victims.

In previous hearings by state insurance regulators, numerous witnesses charged that European insurance companies had been stalling for 50 years to avoid payment on policies taken out by Jews in the 1930s.

Protest Seder

Rabbi Yosef Mendelevitch (seated left) leads a mock Seder for 20 at Har Homa yesterday, to protest the "bondage" of Israel under the hands of the United States. Sponsored by Our Jerusalem, the 45-minute Seder comprised a modern recitation of the text, including the question, 'Why don't the United States, the United Nations and the European Union remove their affliction and pressure from our country?' Protestors placed signs on the chair around the table, including the one next to Mendelervitch that read, "This seat reserved for Jews of Har Homa, 1999." [Text: Elli Wohlgelernter; Photo: Isaac Harari]

Suspected palm arsonist placed under house arrest

By GALIT LIPKIS BECK

Uri Yerimi, 20, who is suspected of setting fire to palm trees, was released to house arrest by Tel Aviv District Court yesterday. He was barred from leaving the country.

Yerimi was released on NIS 50,000 bail. Judge Avraham Beizer agreed to the prosecution's request to postpone his release until this morning to give it time to appeal.

Yerimi is suspected of setting fire to 13 palm trees in the Tel Aviv and Ramat Gan region from December 1997 to March 1998. According to the charge sheet, the acts in question were committed together with two friends, 18 and 20.

The suspect is also accused of damaging a police car, stealing and damaging a vehicle, and stealing a bicycle.

The prosecution asked for an extension of Yerimi's remand until the end of legal proceedings.

Yerimi's lawyer, Haim Misgav, said said the evidence against his client is based on the testimony of his friend, Roni Avraham, who is currently undergoing psychiatric observation at Abarbanel Hospital.

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Public figure denies sodomizing stepson

By GALIT LIPKIS BECK

The public figure from the center of the country accused of indecent behavior toward his stepson denied yesterday in Tel Aviv District Court that he had committed sodomy against him.

But the suspect, whose name and personal details are barred from publication, admitted to committing other acts he is charged with.

According to the charge sheet, the stepfather's acts took place over a 10-year period that began when his stepson was five and ended when he turned 15 in 1987.

The man is charged with sodomizing his stepson at least once a week from the age of 11 to 15.

The case surfaced after the stepson, now 26 and living in the US, decided to seek revenge.

Defense attorney Shmuel Chang, said his client admits to some of the indecent acts committed when the stepson was more than five-years old, but denies that the molestation went on for 10 years.

The indictment charges that the the accused exposed the boy to pornographic material from a young age and forced him to look at his naked body and to watch him and his mother having sex. The accused also allegedly invented a "victim game" in which the boy would lie motionless as his stepfather subjected him to sexual acts.

Prosecutors also accused the man of indecency toward other family members, including his brother-in-law and a niece, when each of them was 10.

Chang had tried to defend his client by invoking the statute of limitations, but the court found that in a case in which a minor is abused, the 10 year limit begins when the victim turns 18.

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Poll: Sabras more Zionist than immigrants

By ARYEH DEAN COHEN

Israelis consider those born here more Zionist than immigrants, and those living on kibbutz and in settlements in Judea and Samaria to be the leading models of Zionism in action, according to a poll conducted by Modi'in Ezrahi for Bar-Ilan University's International Center for Jewish Identity.

Conducted together with the university's Avi-Chai Chair in Society and Judaism, the poll was the first part of a broader survey of Israeli attitudes towards the Zionist/Jewish "collective" currently being prepared by the center.

The poll was conducted on March 29, with 505 Jewish individuals over 18 interviewed. It had a plus or minus 4.5% margin of error.

Called "Who is a Zionist in the eyes of the Israeli Jewish public?", the poll first asked: "Choose who in your eyes is the *most* Zionist from among the following categories, and who would be in second place."

Interviewees were asked to rank 11 different categories of individuals from 1-5. "All those born in Israel" ranked first, with 17.5% (10.2% second choice); "a kibbutz member" ranked second (16.7%, 14.1); and "a settler in Judea and Samaria" ranked third (15.8, 5.8). Students at hesder yeshivot ranked fourth (12.1, 14.7). Supporters of Peace Now finished fifth (8.3, 6.1).

New immigrants fared poorly, with those from Ethiopia scoring 2.4 (7.7 as second choice) and those from Russia just 2.0% (3.3). Residents of development towns scored only 3.1% (7.9), while a student at a haredi yeshiva scored just 3.5 (2.4). "Jews who donate money to Israel" scored even higher than these latter groups, with 4.4% (4.4 *for second choice* as well). Even Druse soldiers scored higher, with 6.5 (12.4 as second choice). A total of 7.8% of the respondents said "they are all the same" or couldn't decide between them.

The second stage of the poll asked the interviewees to simply choose who *among* the 11 was "the most Zionist." Here the kibbutz members scored 30.8%, all those born in Israel 27.5%, hesder yeshiva students 26.8% and settlers 21.6%. Russian immigrants scored lowest at 5.3%, while Ethiopian immigrants scored 10.1%. Jews from the US who contribute money scored 8.8%.

Different groups of Israelis had varying opinions about which group was the most Zionist. Secular Israelis were found to choose "those born in Israel" followed by kibbutz members, then settlers and Peace Now supporters.

Those who identified themselves as "traditional" chose the kibbutz member, the settlers, those born in Israel, and the hesder yeshiva students, in that order. Haredim and observant Israelis picked the settlers first, followed by the yeshiva students.

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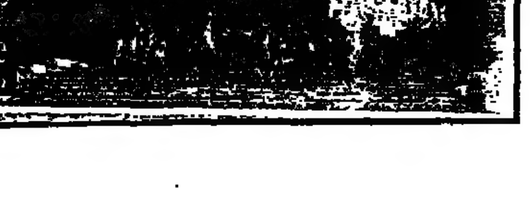
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At least 107 dead in Haj stampede

By TAREK AL-ISSAWI

MECCA (AP) – At least 107 Moslem pilgrims were trampled to death Thursday when panic erupted after several fell off an overpass, the official Saudi news agency reported yesterday.

The stampede occurred on the plains of Mina outside Mecca as pilgrims performed a ritual known as "stoning the devil" on the last day of the hajj, which drew an estimated 2.3 million Moslems, it said.

Some elderly and sick pilgrims fell off an overpass, the agency said. In the rush that ensued, 107 pilgrims were trampled.

The agency said the casualty figure was preliminary and security officials did not have a breakdown of nationalities.

Crowds of tens of thousands had struggled with heat that hovered above 38°C. Helicopters earlier had hovered overhead to spot pilgrims fainting, and workers threw small bags of chilled water from trucks to those making their way to the pillars.

To shield themselves, pilgrims covered their heads with towels or carried umbrellas, some inscribed with "God is great."

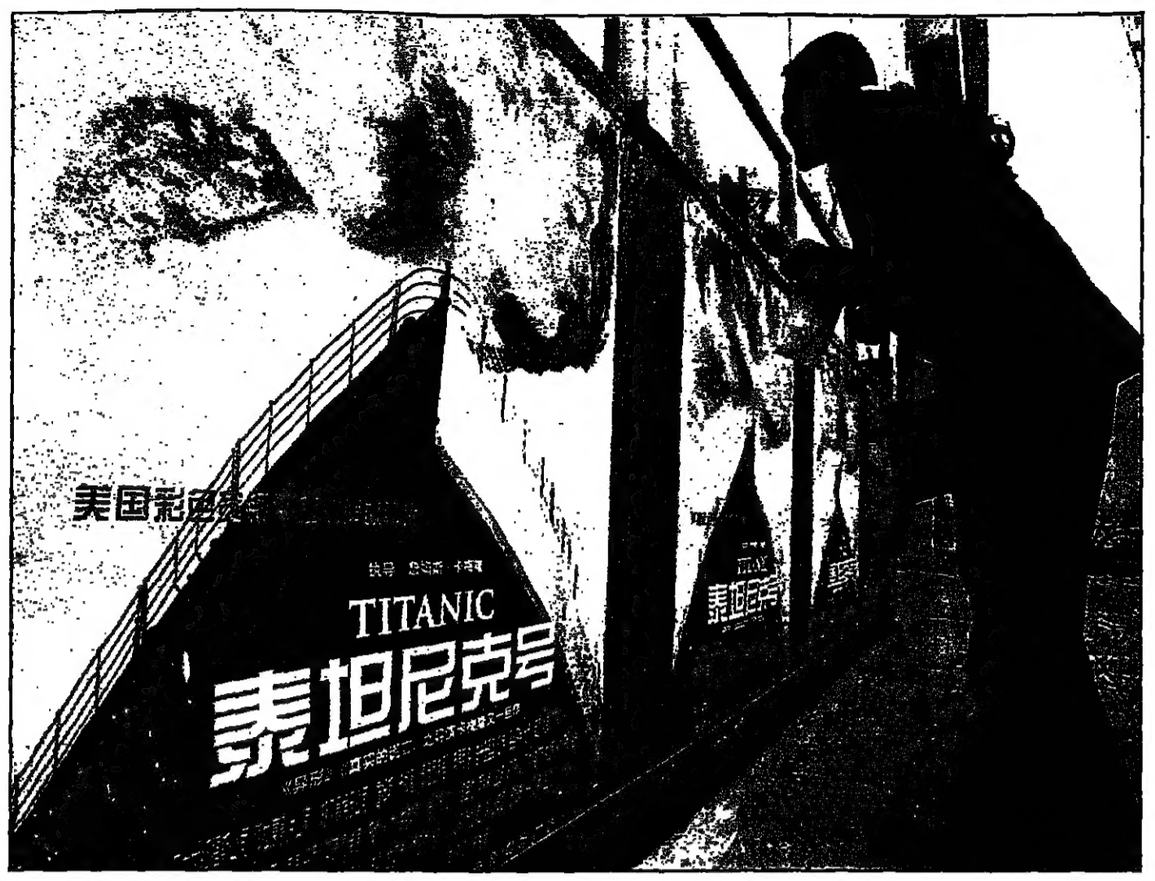
Police using loud speakers had pleaded in Arabic, English, French and Urdu for pilgrims to move along quickly. Other police with batons made room for pilgrims wanting to escape the crowds.

The stampede was the latest tragedy to befall the haj, which in the past has been marred other stampedes, fires and political protests that turned violent. Until Yesterday, Saudi officials had praised the smooth running of this year's pilgrimage.

At the ceremony at the pillars, the 2.3 million pilgrims from more than 100 countries throw seven chickpea-size stones at each of the pillars on the Mina plain three times over as many days.

Yesterday was the last day of the haj. Pilgrims will still circle the Kaaba to end the pilgrimage, an obligation once in a lifetime of every able-bodied Moslem who can afford it.

The Kaaba, a cube-like structure at the Grand Mosque in Mecca, is considered the spiritual center of Islam.



'Titanic' mania hits China

A Chinese woman buys tickets to the movie 'Titanic' in Beijing yesterday. The movie which was praised by Chinese President Jiang Zemin is expected to break box office records in China. (AP)

CSU dim Kohl's reelection hopes

By ERIK KIRSCHBAUM

BONN (Reuters) – It's been a tough week for Helmut Kohl.

Since celebrating his 68th birthday last Friday and heading off for his annual Easter dieting holiday in the Austrian Alps, the burly German chancellor has watched his reelection campaign unravelling.

Ironically, the damage to his already uphill chances of winning an unprecedented fifth term has come not from the opposition but from his own side – Kohl's conservative allies in Bavaria, the Christian Social Union (CSU).

The arch-conservative CSU, sister party to Kohl's Christian Democrats (CDU), launched an ill-timed attack on a recent restatement of a long-standing CDU/CSU policy to raise energy taxes as part of a European effort to cut pollution.

The CSU told the CDU there was no way it would agree to higher energy taxes and unwittingly put the CDU in the same boat as the environmental Greens, who have plunged in opinion polls since calling for sharply higher gasoline taxes.

The CDU, led by parliamentary leader Wolfgang Schaeuble, barked right back – telling the CSU to learn how to read the program it had agreed to two years ago.

Schaeuble issued a blunt public warning: Any more noise like that and the election will be lost.

"We cannot afford any more pandemonium like this again before the federal elections," Schaeuble told *Focus* magazine, the CSU's favorite news weekly.

Schaeuble said the CSU is more worried about a state vote in mid-September before the federal election on September 27 and said it should stop campaigning against the CDU.

"The CSU needs to understand that the CDU is not its main opponent in Bavaria," Schaeuble said, a biting reference to the CSU's efforts to hold on to its absolute majority.

A group of 10 parliamentary deputies from the CDU slammed the CSU for "hysterical" objections to the energy taxes that they said hurt the government's reelection chances.

Kohl, who tries to shed a few of his estimated 160 kg each Easter, tried to silence the dispute with soothing words to *Bild*, the nation's largest tabloid, by saying both sides were right.

But the internecine warfare between the conservative sister parties who are, especially in election years, normally the epitome of discipline, has left political analysts and commentators shaking heads in disbelief.

How, they ask, can the party that is already some 10 percentage points behind the Social Democrats (SPD) hope to make a comeback if they cannot come to terms on what they agreed on two years ago? How can Kohl defeat the SPD's young, charismatic challenger, Gerhard Schroeder? How can the CDU/CSU alliance have any chance of winning when unemployment is at post-war levels, above 12 percent, and with no signs of falling any time soon?

"The coalition in Bonn seems to be devoid of any ambition to win the election at the moment," said the conservative daily *Die Welt* in an editorial yesterday.

Russia blames Latvia for crisis

By ANNA DOLGOV

MOSCOW (AP) – Russia kept up its verbal attacks on neighboring Latvia yesterday, accusing the Baltic country of provoking a crisis in relations by discriminating against the nation's Russian-speaking minority.

Latvia must "treat the problems of its 700,000-strong Russian-speaking population seriously" if it wants good relations with Russia, said the Kremlin spokesman, Sergei Yastrzhembsky.

"The Latvian elite cannot live comfortably at the expense of Russia while playing the card of Russophobia," Yastrzhembsky added, according to the Interfax news agency.

On Wednesday, acting Prime Minister Sergei Kiriyenko announced that the government has drafted a series of economic steps against Latvia, including restrictions on purchases of Latvian goods and limits on transit shipments of Russian oil through Latvia.

As part of the measures, Russia will reduce its oil transits through Latvia by 610,000 tons in the second quarter of this year, a spokesman for acting First Deputy Prime Minister Boris Nemtsov was quoted as saying yesterday by Interfax news agency.

The reduction would bring the transits to 3.09 million tons, down about 15 percent from the first quarter.

The Fuel and Energy Ministry has estimated that a bigger reduction would lead to serious losses for Russia, Interfax reported.

The sanctions could also hurt ethnic Russians in Latvia.

About 80% of the workers at export-related companies, which are most likely to feel an immediate sting from the sanctions, are ethnic Russians, the Baltic News Service reported.

According to Latvian government statistics, 740,000 ethnic Russians were registered in Latvia in 1997 – 453,000 of them non-citizens – in addition to tens of thousands of ethnic Belarusians and Ukrainians.

Russian-Latvian relations have been strained over the minority since the 1991 Soviet collapse: Latvia, with a population of 2.6 million, denies the discrimination charges.

The friction has escalated since Latvian police broke up a demonstration by Russian-speaking pensioners last month.

Protests from Moscow grew following an explosion Monday near the Russian embassy in the Latvian capital Riga.

Possible Russian sanctions, if implemented, could deal a heavy blow to Latvia's economy, which derives considerable fees from the passage of Russian exports.

The Latvian Economics Ministry estimated that Latvian companies stand to lose 150 million lats ($255 million) if Russia imposes the measures.

Latvia's Ventspils oil terminal is said to be the second-largest outlet for Russian oil exports, second only to Novorossiisk. Potential loss from a total cutoff of Russian oil exports would be about $120m. a year, according to figures provided by the Baltic News Service.

But with Russia's other main oil export outlets operating at or near capacity, there seems to be no immediate alternative left to the Latvian terminal.

Latvia's ambassador to Moscow, Imants Daudis, warned yesterday that any sanctions might hit Russia itself "like a boomerang," the Interfax news agency reported.

Clinton orders plans for Pol Pot's arrest

PHNOM PENH (Reuters) – US President Bill Clinton has ordered the Defense, State and Justice departments to devise plans for the arrest and trial of Pol Pot, *The New York Times* reported yesterday.

Cambodia would welcome efforts by the United States and Thailand to bring notorious former Khmer Rouge leader Pol Pot to trial in an international court, a government spokesman said.

"It's a bit late but we welcome this move," said secretary of state for information, Khieu Kanharith. "We've been waiting nearly 20 years for Pol Pot."

More than a million people died of starvation, hard labor or were executed during Pol Pot's 1975-79 "killing fields" rule.

Pol Pot and his Khmer Rouge were forced from power by a Vietnamese invasion in 1979 but the guerrilla force, until last year commanded by Pol Pot, still wages a low-intensity war against the government.

Pol Pot, who is now in his mid 70s, was purged last year after a power struggle with Khmer Rouge military commander Ta Mok.

He is being held under house arrest in a Khmer Rouge stronghold on easily-defended high ground just inside northern Cambodia's border with Thailand.

He told a reporter who interviewed him last week that his health was poor.

The Khmer Rouge has been severely weakened by splits in recent years and the defection of hundreds of guerrillas late last month led to factional clashes in the north of the country and renewed speculation Pol Pot might be brought to justice.

The *Times* said the Thai government has suggested it would be willing to take Pol Pot into custody as long as the United States agreed to spirit him out of Thailand within hours of his capture.

US and Thai embassy officials in Phnom Penh were not available for comment.

Khieu Kanharith said the government wanted to see Pol Pot face trial outside Cambodia and would welcome Thailand's help in seeing he was brought to justice.

"We think an international trial would be better. With all this political passion, everyone would try to politicize the Pol Pot case," he said.

"Every government has a duty to arrest and bring to court people guilty of genocide," he said. "With the help of the Thai government and Thai army, maybe they can catch him."

A leading researcher into the excesses of Pol Pot and his Khmer Rouge comrades said he was ready to provide a court with evidence of their deeds.

"This is what we have been waiting to see – justice for those who died under Khmer Rouge rule. We should all welcome this," said Youk Chhang of the Cambodian genocide documentation center.

"We've been investigating for 20 years. If Pol Pot is arrested we can provide all the documentation to try him," he said.

US officials cautioned that there was no guarantee that the ailing Khmer Rouge leader would be apprehended. They said Clinton issued a written order on Monday to organize logistics for Pol Pot's capture and trial, the *Times* said.

Under one plan being discussed within the administration, an American military plane would take Pol Pot from Thailand to a third country, possibly the Netherlands, where international tribunals are prosecuting war crimes carried out in Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia, the paper said.

"We've had many false alarms before with the Khmer Rouge, but this may be our best chance to get Pol Pot," a Clinton administration official involved in the planning told the *Times*. "We're not going to be caught unprepared if he's made available to us."

Western diplomats told the paper that prosecutors at the international tribunals in The Hague had already tentatively agreed to organize a trial for Pol Pot for crimes against humanity as long as the UN Security Council empowers them to oversee the prosecution.

Be happy with Budha's tooth

By ANNIE HUANG

TAIPEI, Taiwan (AP) – Singing hymns and praying for peace and luck, thousands of Buddhist followers led by Premier Vincent Siew greeted the arrival yesterday of a holy tooth believed to have belonged to Buddha.

As the tooth, encased in a miniature golden pagoda, was escorted off an airplane by monks in yellow saffron, scores of women in white blouses prostrated themselves and spread their long hair over a red carpet. Others knelt in rows, clasping their hands in front to express their reverence.

The ceremony at Taipei's international airport to greet the gift from a temple in India was one of the largest religious events Taiwan has seen. A quarter of Taiwan's 21 million people are Buddhists.

Buddhists say the tooth, one of three reportedly found after Buddha was cremated 2,400 years ago, brings blessings for those who live where it is housed and keeps them from disaster.

Taiwan needs those blessings. The island has recently been hit by a string of aviation disasters, high-profile violent crimes and corruption scandals.

The air disasters, which have killed more than 200 people this year, have brought down the transport minister and the civil aviation chief.

At a prayer ceremony at the airport, scores of politicians in black suits were among followers who bowed three times before an altar where the tooth sits amid a cloud of incense smoke.

"We pray for your merciful blessings," Premier Siew said in a prayer to Buddha. "Give our country prosperity, let us have propitious winds and rains, bring the people plenty of food and clothes and let us have peace and harmony in our society."

Wu Poh-hsiung, an adviser to President Lee Teng-hui, said worshipping the tooth was "by no means superstitious," but would help people "draw strength from religious belief."

The comment was apparently an effort to counter criticism that leaders were resorting to religion to resolve Taiwan's problems.

Impoverished Armenia swears in new president

By HASMIK MKRTCHYAN

YEREVAN (Reuters) – Robert Kocharyan, liberal on reforms but tough on his country's dispute with oil-rich Azerbaijan, was sworn in yesterday as Armenia's new president and vowed to revive the shattered economy.

Kocharyan, 43 and hitherto prime minister, took office 10 days after winning a controversial run-off election against Karen Demirchyan, Armenia's Soviet-era Communist boss.

"I swear to guarantee the independence, territorial integrity and security of my country," said Kocharyan, swearing on a bible and the constitution before being blessed by the head of the ancient Armenian Apostolic Church, Garegin I.

Hundreds of dignitaries and diplomats as well as former president Levon Ter-Petrosyan, who resigned in February, were on hand for the morning ceremony at the Opera House in Yerevan, capital of the impoverished but strategically located republic.

Kocharyan, who won praise from the West for fighting corruption and backing radical economic reforms during his year as prime minister, promised to revive Armenia's economy, badly hit by the break up of the former Soviet Union and the wrangle with Azerbaijan over the disputed enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh.

"The economic policy of our country should be aimed at creation favourable conditions for foreign investors, the revival of domestic enterprises and increasing employment," he said in remarks after taking office.

But he stuck to a hard line on Karabakh, which is in Azerbaijan but populated mainly by Armenians. Diplomats in the region say Kocharyan's views are likely to make it harder to find a quick breakthrough in the long-running dispute.

Conspicuously absent from the inauguration was Demirchyan, who says Kocharyan used his position as acting head of state and prime minister to rob him of victory in the March 30 contest.

Kocharyan won 59.5 percent to 40.5% for Demirchyan.

The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), which had by far the biggest foreign observer group monitoring balloting, gave the vote a lukewarm endorsement.

The OSCE said there had been irregularities but it did not call the results of the election into question. It said in some areas there was significant progress over fraud-plagued votes in 1995 and 1996 which soiled Armenia's image abroad.

Some say the election shortcomings, which included ballot box stuffing and forged ballot papers, were still serious enough to prevent it from fully repairing its democratic reputation and opening the door further to foreign economic assistance.

With a view to speeding up privatization and cutting red tape now he is fully in charge, Kocharyan looks likely to favor Economy and Finance Minister Armen Darbinyan as the new premier.

The unveiling and commemoration of the *shloshim* of
LOUIS GOLDMAN ז"ל
will be held at Eretz Hachaim Cemetery, Beit Shemesh,
on Sunday, April 19, 1998 at 5 p.m.
Muriel Goldman and Family

On the second yahrzeit of our beloved
Rabbi Dr. MATTHEW KATZ
we will gather
at the Sde Yehoshua Cemetery (Oren Gate) in Haifa
on Sunday, April 19 (23 Nissan) at 5 p.m.
The Family

In Memoriam
LUDWIG JESSELSON ז"ל

On the occasion of the fifth yahrzeit of Ludwig Jesselson, of blessed memory, we remember this extraordinary and humble man whose very being radiated kindness, dignity and modesty. He viewed his charitable activities, undertaken with his wife and partner, Erica, as strengthening the future of Israel and Klal Yisrael. Surely his leadership and patronage of so many vital organizations helped to shape the history of the Jewish People in our generation.

As a devoted benefactor and friend of Shaare Zedek Medical Center, Luddy was a true visionary and leader par excellence. Together with Erica, they made the dream of a comprehensive heart institute a reality. The Jesselson Heart Center has developed an international reputation for state-of-the-art medical excellence and compassionate care. As the beneficiaries of his wise counsel and guidance, we miss him dearly.

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Yeltsin's PM nominee faces rejection today

By GARETH JONES

MOSCOW (Reuters) – Russian lawmakers yesterday looked ready to defy President Boris Yeltsin over his nominee for prime minister, but signalled they still hoped to avert a showdown that would trigger early parliamentary elections.

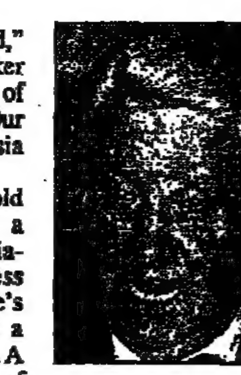
As the political parties in the State Duma lower chamber took up positions for today's vote on Sergei Kiriyenko's candidacy, workers across Russia's 11 time zones took to the streets in a nationwide day of protests against wage arrears.

But early indications from the Far East and Siberia suggested the rallies were much smaller than the 15-million strong protests predicted by Yeltsin's Communist foes.

Labor leaders have distanced themselves from Communist calls to turn the protests into an all-out campaign to force Yeltsin to reverse his market reforms. They have welcomed Kiriyenko's pledges to tackle poverty and wage arrears.

But opposition to Kiriyenko's nomination showed no signs of weakening in the Duma, where many regard the 35-year-old former banker as too young and inexperienced to head a government.

"Kiriyenko has no chance tomorrow of getting the support of the Duma. The parties are in a very tough mood," said deputy speaker Vladimir Ryzhkov of the pro-Yeltsin Our Home Is Russia party.



Boris Yeltsin (AP)

But he told reporters after a meeting of parliamentary business managers: "There's no need to make a tragedy out of this. A rejection of Kiriyenko's nomination tomorrow will give more time for consultations."

The Kremlin has warned parliament Yeltsin will renominate Kiriyenko until he gets his way and would go as far as to dissolve parliament if necessary.

If the Duma rejects three presidential nominations for premier, the constitution demands a new parliamentary election.

Yeltsin, who nominated Kiriyenko two weeks ago after sacking veteran prime minister Viktor Chernomyrdin and his entire cabinet, met his candidate at the Kremlin yesterday.

Kremlin press spokesman Sergei Yastrzhembsky told reporters the two men focused on the "tone" of Kiriyenko's planned address to the Duma today.

Kiriyenko won warm plaudits from visiting Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev, in Moscow to discuss energy sector cooperation with Yeltsin.

"Chernomyrdin was in charge of economic reforms for five-and-a-half crisis-ridden years, but now the government should be headed by a young man who can to look forward... and give reforms a push," the Interfax news agency quoted Nazarbayev as saying.

Yeltsin and Nazarbayev were both expected to visit Chernomyrdin yesterday to congratulate the former prime minister on his 60th birthday.

Chernomyrdin, sacked in Yeltsin's words for failing to end wage arrears, has said he will run for the presidency in the mid-2000 election, but has won only a lukewarm endorsement from Yeltsin.

Yastrzhembsky said the Kremlin wants to overcome the political crisis quickly in order to tackle Russia's economic and social problems.

"The faster a new government is formed, the more actively it will be able to tackle the issues of wage arrears," he said.

"[Friday] will be a very important day for Sergei Kiriyenko, for the State Duma, and for the whole country," he said.

Deputy Prime Minister Oleg Sysuyev told Interfax that ministers are already drawing up measures to prevent wage arrears building up in the future.

Millions of Russian workers in both private and public sectors often wait many months to be paid due to poor tax collection and a web of indebtedness between firms.

"The government speaks of stabilization but there is no stabilization," said one angry protester addressing a rally in the Siberian city of Novosibiirsk. "For us reform is the struggle against unemployment and the creation of new jobs but many firms which were once very strong are now standing idle."

Karadzic leaves Bosnia as Hague trial nears

By FREDRIK DAHL

PARIS (Reuters) – A French newspaper said yesterday that Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic had left Bosnia for another eastern European state and may soon appear before the international war crimes tribunal in The Hague.

Le Monde said Karadzic left the Serb-controlled town of Pale in November 1997 and had since been in contact with two American lawyers to explore the possibility of turning himself in to the tribunal.

The newspaper's report was based on unidentified French secret service officials.

The Hague tribunal has indicted Karadzic, who led Bosnian Serbs during the 43-month Bosnian war in the former Yugoslav republic, for crimes committed by his troops during the bloody ethnic fighting.

The international community has repeatedly urged Karadzic to turn himself in, but multinational peacekeeping forces in Bosnia have made no direct attempt to arrest him in his Pale stronghold.

Le Monde said the French secret services believed Karadzic had long left Pale and was now living in an eastern European state, possibly Belarus.

The French Foreign Ministry had no immediate comment.

UN envoy to Bosnia Elisabeth Rehn said on Wednesday she believed Karadzic was likely to appear soon before the war crimes tribunal.

She said his position had become precarious since several former members of the Bosnian Serb regime accused by the tribunal of war crimes had either given themselves up or been arrested.

"I have heard rumors that he has been preparing his defense for a long time," Rehn said.

Le Monde said the whereabouts of Karadzic's military commander Ratko Mladic, also sought by the international tribunal, were more mysterious.

Again quoting French intelligence sources, the newspaper said that Mladic spent most of his time in the Bosnian sector patrolled by American peacekeeping forces and also may have left Bosnia for an unknown destination.

Meanwhile, NATO-led troops on Wednesday arrested two Bosnian Serbs wanted for war crimes and the Western alliance vowed to bring to justice other suspects still at large.

NATO Secretary-General Javier Solana named the two men as Miroslav Kvocka and Mladen Radic, both indicted by the International War Crimes Tribunal in The Hague.

"They are now being processed for transfer to The Hague," Solana said.

Kvocka and Radic were indicted in 1995 for crimes against civilian prisoners at Omarska detention camp near Prijedor in northwestern Bosnia, where Moslems and Croats were rounded up and some were allegedly tortured and killed.

The two men were among 19 Serbs charged with atrocities at Omarska, where more than 3,000 Croats and Muslims were held between May and August 1992.

Radic, a junior commander, was charged with raping one victim on five occasions.

In 1996, a UN report said the two were working as policemen in north-western Bosnia, despite being war crimes suspects.

In Washington, US State Department spokesman James Rubin said the two men had been arrested, apparently without injury, in the sector of Bosnia under the control of British troops.

Lieutenant-Commander Louis Garneau, spokesman for the NATO-led stabilization force (SFOR) in Bosnia, said the arrests were made in the late afternoon as part of a SFOR operation.

He said Kvocka, 41, and Radic, 45, turned themselves in when it became clear they could not escape.

"This is very encouraging and a good message for indictees: they had better turn themselves in or SFOR will pick them up," he said.

Some 74 people are publicly acknowledged to have been indicted by the Hague-based court for war crimes in connection with the conflict in Bosnia. Twenty-five are now in custody, including the two latest detainees.

Solana said SFOR would continue to carry out its mandate "firmly and fairly" in Bosnia and would not tolerate behavior in violation of the 1995 Dayton peace agreement, which ended the three-year war.

"This action by SFOR is yet another warning to all those indicted for war crimes who are still at large that they, too, will be brought to justice," Solana said.

He called on those indicted to surrender immediately to the war crimes tribunal.

Workers largely ignore Left-led Russia strike

By YELENA SMIRNOVA

NOVOSIBIRSK, Russia (Reuters) – Thousands of angry workers took to the streets in Russia's Far East and Siberia yesterday to protest at mounting wage arrears, but many more appeared to have ignored calls for a nationwide day of action.

The marchers won a response in Moscow. Prime minister-designate Sergei Kiriyenko, wooing the opposition before a confirmation hearing in parliament today, told his interim cabinet: "You can understand people... They go to work and don't get their money. The government has a duty to resolve this issue."

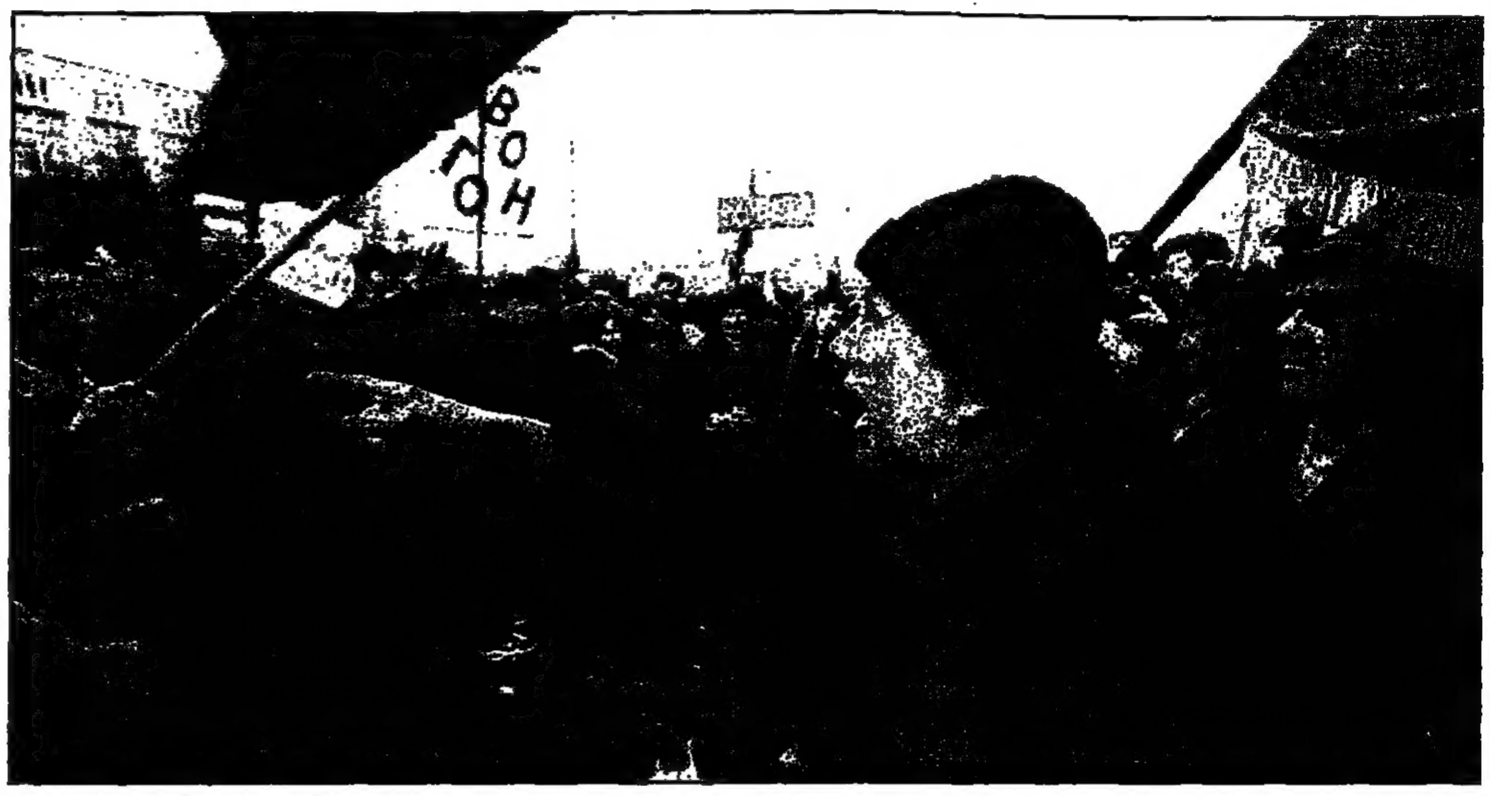
Acting deputy premier Oleg Sisuyev was quoted as saying afterwards that money had been set aside in national and local budgets to meet all public sector wages, and some $115 million had been sent to regions with special needs.

Debts to public employees like teachers, doctors and soldiers were a key factor that prompted President Boris Yeltsin to sack veteran prime minister Viktor Chernomyrdin last month and nominate Kiriyenko, a 35-year-old technocrat, for the job.

But wage arrears in the public sector account for only a small proportion of a total debt estimated by trade unions at a record 57.7 billion roubles ($9.6 billion). Many enterprises cannot afford to pay their workers.

"Give Us Our Wages!" read a banner over a rally of about 5,000 mostly elderly protesters in Novosibirsk, a major industrial and scientific research center in Siberia.

"The government speaks of stabilization but there is no stabilization," said one angry speaker on the platform.



A Communist woman argues with students at a protest outside Moscow's White House yesterday, where Russian trade unionists and opposition activists launched a nationwide protest against government economic policies. (AP)

Police said some 4,000 people attended a rally in the Pacific port of Vladivostok, eight time zones east of Moscow.

Despite a call by senior labor union officials to keep the protests non-political – their national leadership has come out in support of Kiriyenko and his promise to pay wages – the Vladivostok demonstrators passed a motion demanding that Yeltsin quit. They also backed a Communist call for a coalition government.

Red Soviet flags mingled with banners carried by ultra-nationalist followers of maverick politician Vladimir Zhirinovsky, who enjoys strong support in the home port of Russia's rusting Pacific Fleet. There were no reports of violence or other trouble.

Doctors in Vladivostok threatened to halt all treatment, even emergencies, next week unless they got $1 million in back wages.

Some workers in the Far East had not been paid for two years, trade unionists said. Delays of several months were typical.

"Today about 20 percent of all Russian workers get their pay late, up to a year behind schedule in some cases," Alexei Surikov, deputy head of the national Federation of Independent Trade Unions, said in Moscow.

Despite the problems, many people keep turning up for work.

Most coal mines in Siberia's Kuzbass region were still producing on Thursday, Itar-Tass news agency reported.

The deputy head of the independent trade union movement in Vladivostok, Nikolai Kostyukov, said more than 100,000 people had taken part in protests across the region, mainly one-day strikes or two-hour symbolic stoppages.

National union leaders had forecast nearly two million workers would strike yesterday – well short of the 20 million they said took part a year ago in a similar day of action. The Communist Party said it expected 15 million to take part.

Kiriyenko appeared set to lose today's vote in the Communist-led parliament. But Yeltsin has said that in such a case he would renominate him, and an eventual compromise is widely expected.

Kiriyenko has won backing from trade union leaders for his vow to end wage arrears.

"Kiriyenko has given us hope," Surikov said. "He is prepared to look at a mechanism with us of paying off these debts."

Japanese prime minister unveils tax-cut plan

By YOKO NISHIKAWA

TOKYO (Reuters) – Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto yesterday announced income tax cuts of four trillion yen ($30.5 billion), finally bowing to international pressure for bold action to revive Japan's economy.

But the first reaction from markets was that the new fiscal stimulus steps were not bold enough with the dollar surging against the yen because the tax cuts were not permanent.

"It is imperative that we improve our economy. While we must continue our fiscal reforms, we must take bold steps to stimulate the economy," Hashimoto said in a long-awaited announcement of new efforts to halt Japan sliding into recession.

Hashimoto said the stimulus package added up to a total of 10 trillion yen in real spending, including the tax cuts.

The cuts were made up of two trillion yen for this fiscal year and another two trillion for 1999/2000.

Substantial tax cuts require a revision of the fiscal reform law which Hashimoto pushed through just five months ago. The law requires the government to cut the issuance of deficit-financing bonds – which are used to pay for the tax cuts – every year until they are eliminated in 2003/2004.

Hashimoto said he would like to keep any such revisions to a minimum. He said he will reconvene the Fiscal Reform Panel on Friday for a review of the law, including possible measures allowing flexibility in issuing such bonds.

"The economic stimulus package is not sufficient to turn the tide as the tax cut will be kept within the framework of the fiscal reform law," said Akihiro Naemura, general manager at Okasan Securities.

"If it's temporary (tax cuts), it's temporary and it's not a tax cut. It's arithmetic, but it's bad economics," said Jesper Koll, chief economist at JP Morgan.

"Ten trillion is two percent of the GDP. Will it prevent the GDP from going negative? I think the answer is yes," he said.

"Does it lay the foundation for a sustainable economic recovery? The answer is, only if it's permanent." The business community also said they were let down.

"It is regrettable that an additional cut in income taxes would be limited to two trillion yen this year," said Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Nissho) chairman Kosaku Inaba.

"Given the current sluggish consumer confidence, I think the government should have come up with a larger-scale, permanent tax cut," Inaba said in a statement. Hashimoto himself admitted he was unsure of the effects of the tax cuts.

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Tuesday May 19 conference (Hebrew)
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Thursday May 21 guest lecture (Hebrew)
Dr. Meir Rosen, former Israeli U.N. Ambassador
"The Jewish Element in Israeli Foreign Policy"
(Levine Visiting Professorship Program, Faculty of Law)

Thursday May 28 guest lecture (English)
Prof. Sylvia Barak Fishman, Brandeis University
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Pessah unity

This week Jews, Christians, and Moslems all celebrate different holidays that share common elements – Pessah, Easter, and Id al-Adha. Easter marks a Pessah Seder, and Id al-Adha, like Pessah is a feast of celebration associated with pilgrimage and sacrifice. On another level, however, the holidays have little in common, and most of us have little idea what the other is celebrating.

When the debate over the conversion bill was at its peak, it seemed as if the three major streams of Jewish practice – Reform, Conservative, and Orthodox – were also on separate trajectories and growing further apart. But unlike the arguments between religions, in the inter-Jewish argument all agree on the goal sufficiently to accuse the others of undermining it: furthering the unity and future of Jewish people.

On Monday, a special cabinet committee decided to adopt the Neeman Committee recommendations, including the establishment of a Jewish studies institute for prospective converts. The first institute, slated for Beersheba, will have a board that includes Reform, Conservative, and Orthodox rabbis, like the Neeman Committee itself. Funding should not be a problem, since the greatest proponent of the project is Finance Minister Yaakov Neeman.

What, at first blush, could be a problem is that neither the Chief Rabbinate, nor the Reform and Conservative movements, have fully endorsed the Neeman Committee's recommendations. In its response to the recommendations, the rabbinate hurled insults at the Reform and Conservative movements and dismissed any form of cooperation with them. And Reform leaders have called the establishment of a joint institute "meaningless" without the rabbinate's approval.

It is certainly true that the Neeman Committee extracted no commitment from the rabbinate, nor even from its own Orthodox members, that the Orthodox-only conversion courts would start converting people who may not want to commit to adopting an Orthodox way of life. This has been the problem all along – that the regular Orthodox conversion courts have driven away thousands of potential converts, mostly from among the Russian immigrants, with halachicly unnecessary requirements that most of the country's population could not meet.

It is understandable that the Reform and Conservative movements would be skeptical about a process with no guarantees of leading anywhere, except the wall of rabbinate rejection that has met them so far. It is also not surprising that the Reform and Conservative movements would be unwilling to abandon their legal struggles for recognition while the rabbinate continues to refuse even to sit in the same room with them. But it is both factually, tactically, and morally wrong for the Reform and Conservative movements to continue to act as if the Neeman recommendations are dead. Since the committee submitted its report, 81 Knesset members have signed a letter endorsing its work, the Knesset voted in its support, the board of the Jewish Agency voted to implement its recommendations, and now the cabinet has voted overwhelmingly to make the joint conversion institute a reality.

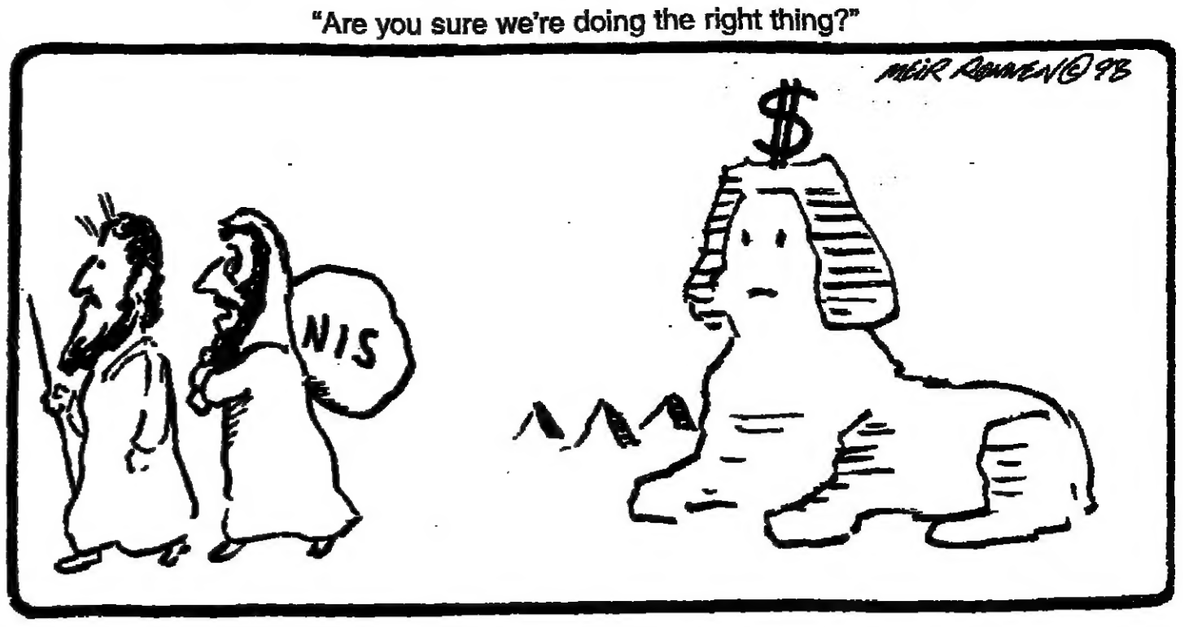
The irony is that historically the Reform and Conservative movements have argued that they were not interested in the rabbinate's recognition, because they had no need of validation from any representative of Orthodoxy. Rather, the non-Orthodox movements sought the recognition of the Jewish state, which they argued should represent all major streams of Jewish practice. The clear public and governmental endorsement of a religious institution that explicitly includes all three streams should be a cause of celebration, not derision, for the Reform and Conservative movements.

Whether the establishment of this and like institutes will result in a greater openness, within Halacha, from rabbinical conversion courts remains to be seen. But surely it is a prospect worth testing – while keeping the option of returning to the legal and political battlefield open should the Neeman approach fail. As a practical matter, the Supreme Court could well cite the political and substantive backing of the Neeman process to dismiss the Reform and Conservative legal challenges. Should this happen, the non-Orthodox movements would probably lose some of the goodwill they had earned during the fight over the conversion bill. An alternative strategy would be to embrace the Neeman process, and leverage it into as many joint institutions as possible.

The remarkable thing about the Neeman Committee's work is that it has revealed a groundswell of official and public willingness to ignore the extreme statements of the rabbinate, and support the country's first government-sponsored exercise in religious pluralism. Yet instead of reveling in this victory, the Reform and Conservative movements are, so far, rescuing the rabbinate from its political and popular isolation.

Tonight, Jews around the world will celebrate their freedom from bondage some 3,000 years ago. But it is not just freedom, as momentous as that is, that we celebrate, but the formation of the bonds of Jewish peoplehood. It is these bonds that have been a principal pillar of Jewish survival and uniqueness. The celebration itself is a prime example of Jewish unity, in that even most secular Israelis will participate in a Seder tonight. It is in this spirit that most Israelis and most Jews want the defenders of each of Judaism's streams to learn to live with each other, and to find together a way to welcome those willing to join the Jewish people into their midst.

"Are you sure we're doing the right thing?"



The wages of a non-policy

MOSHE ARENS

The recent incident of mass violence at the Beduin village of Umm al-Sahali in Galilee should serve as a reminder that the level of frustration and anger among the Beduin community is approaching the boiling point. The way the Israeli-Arab political leadership immediately embraced its cause, the participation of Moslem fundamentalists in the anti-government demonstration at the village, the appearance of Palestinian flags there, all these are danger signals that should be heeded before it is too late.

The non-Jewish minorities constitute about 20 percent of Israel's population, and that percentage is growing. The fact that the question of how they are to be integrated into society has never been addressed by the government – in effect the policy regarding the minority population is a non-policy – is an indication that successive governments have neglected to deal with a challenge that undoubtedly deserves the highest priority.

The result, especially in recent years, is a growing alienation and increasing strength of Moslem fundamentalists among our Arab population.

An outstanding case in point is the Beduin population. There are about 120,000 Beduin in the Negev and over 50,000 in Galilee, constituting about a quarter of Israel's Moslem citizens. Of all of Israel's citizens, Jews or Arabs, they are the most disadvantaged and are facing the greatest difficulties.

Finding themselves in the midst of a rapid and forced transition from their traditional nomadic way of life to urbanization, their new urban centers rapidly turning into slums, engaged in a dispute with the state over land ownership, and neglected by the government, a community that was known for its loyalty to the state and its contribution to the defense establishment, is becoming increasingly hostile and belligerent.

Government neglect is driving the Beduin into the arms of Palestinian radicals and Moslem fundamentalists

Moslem fundamentalists and Palestinian radicals are quick to exploit this situation and are making significant inroads into the Beduin community. The Beduin, who in past years had not identified with the Palestinian struggle against Israel, or with the Moslem establishment, are becoming increasingly identified with the Palestinian cause and Moslem fundamentalism. Government neglect is driving them into the arms of Palestinian radicals and Moslem fundamentalists.

IT is not only the Beduin that are being ignored. Most of Israel's minority population has been left in an anomalous position ever since David Ben-Gurion's decision in the early years of statehood that Druse and Circassians are to be subject to military service, while the Arab population, including the Beduin, is to be exempt.

Enjoying the rights of citizenship while not shouldering all of its obligations was bound to lead to a sense of alienation from the state and society, a sense that full loyalty is not expected. At the same time, the fact that they do not share fully in the obligations of citizenship served implicitly as an excuse for the government not to deal with their problems and difficulties with the same vigor as with those of the Jewish population, creating a fully justified feeling of discrimination among the Arab population.

Since the Oslo Accords, that seem to have led to a further disorientation of many of Israel's Arabs, there have been a number of incidents, such as the visit of Israeli-Arab politicians to Damascus and their anti-Israeli declarations there, that in any other country would have been seen as expressions of disloyalty, but were ignored here.

MK Abdul Wahab Darawshe, during a recent visit to Jordan, proudly announced that he had been instrumental in dissuading Israeli Beduin from volunteering for service in the IDF. That can hardly be interpreted as a demonstration of loyalty to the state.

What should be our policy toward our minorities? Full equality before the law, no doubt. But also full equality in the obligations of citizenship. The present asymmetry between rights and obligations is an anomaly that, if allowed to continue, will exacerbate the already difficult relationship between them and the rest of society. There can be no equality of civic obligations without military service, the ultimate expression of loyalty to the country.

The existing program to encourage Beduin to volunteer for regular service in the IDF should be expanded. A similar program should be instituted for the rest of the Arab population. In time, such programs should lead to obligatory military service, equal to that presently existing for Jews, Druse and Circassians.

In parallel, the IDF must set the example in providing complete equality of opportunity in its ranks and in all its services. This can serve as a beginning for the integration of the Arab population into society and the normalization of its relationship with the rest of Israel.

Arafat's kashrut certificate

MARK A. HELLER

There is a good chance that Muhi Sharif will become a case study for the television series *Unsolved Mysteries*. The way things are going, we may never learn who really killed him.

The Palestinian Authority blames it on a power struggle in Hamas. Hamas spokesmen have explicitly blamed Israel and hinted that the PA was involved, and Israeli sources have suggested that he killed himself in a "work accident." Despite Hamas accusations, however, it looks as though Israel is in the clear: government spokesmen forcefully denied any involvement from the very outset, and the PA, after initially pointing the finger at Israel, investigated further and concluded that the Israeli denials were justified.

In all the confusion, two bizarre aspects of the case stand out. The first is that Israel denied any responsibility for the death of a wanted terrorist responsible for the murder of over 60 Israelis. The second is that, apart from Hamas, the Israeli denial was not taken seriously until Yasser Arafat certified it as kosher.

Whatever the truth in this particular incident, these developments raise some very disturbing questions about the future of Israeli counter-terrorism. This is not the first time that a terrorist suspect has been terminated with extreme prejudice. But it is the first time that Israeli leaders, from the prime minister on down, have vigorously and publicly rejected the notion that Israel was in any way involved. The normal practice is to avoid any comment if possible, to admit complicity only in the face of incontrovertible evidence – as in the Mashaal case – but never to deny.

Long-standing policy was abandoned now because the government feared a Hamas reprisal attack, and with good reason. After all, the wave of terrorist bombings in 1994 and in the spring of 1996 can easily be understood as revenge for Baruch Goldstein's massacre of Moslem worshippers in the Tomb of the Patriarchs and for the assassination of Yihye Ayyash – even if those now in power then found it more convenient to blame Yitzhak Rabin and Oslo.

Israel's denial of responsibility for Sharif's death was not taken seriously until Yasser Arafat certified it as kosher

Thus, the very same people who insist that Palestinian terrorists don't need any reason beyond the fact of Israel's existence to do what they do, fell all over themselves proclaiming that they had no part in Muhi Sharif's "martyrdom," in order to deny Palestinian terrorists a reason to do what they were threatening to do.

SO far, this has worked, although the "so far" must be very tentative, because there is no evidence that potential terrorists believe either the Israeli or the PA version of events. And whether they think that Israel or the PA is to blame for Sharif's death, they will almost certainly see Israelis as the most attractive target for whatever revenge they decide to take.

But even if the denial continues to work this time, the precedent of denial has eliminated the possibility of any uncertainty or ambiguity in the future, and this is a problem so long as there is still a need to resort to this arrow in the quiver of counter-terrorism measures.

From now on, any comment other than an outright denial, including "no comment," will inevitably be interpreted as an admission of responsibility for somebody's death. So unless an Israeli leader, for some unfathomable reason, wants to claim responsibility, Israel will have to deny everything, every time.

But such consistent denials will have no credibility unless they are backed up by an unimpeachable source. Enter, Yasser Arafat. This time, Arafat concluded that it was not in his interest to have a terrorist attack take place, so there was no political problem to support Binyamin Netanyahu's plea of "not guilty." But what will happen if the same consideration does not prevail next time?

If Israel's "innocence" depends not on Israeli denials but on Palestinian corroboration, there will still be no problem if the Palestinian investigation is carried out by an independent and objective commission of inquiry. But if such an institution does not exist, everything will depend on Palestinian political calculations. And what if Arafat determines that it is in his interest to have Israel blamed for something it didn't do (or did do) and is less afraid of the Israeli response to a terrorist attack carried out in response to an alleged (or real) Israeli action than Israel is of the terrorist attack itself?

From now on, Israel can abstain from direct action against terrorists and tell the truth, or continue to act when necessary and lie about it. But in either case, the claim will be believed and the desired effect (possibly) achieved only if the Palestinian counterpart whom Netanyahu drives to distraction decides to support Israel's position.

The irony is that the Netanyahu who put Israel in this absurd position is the same Netanyahu who once made his reputation as a counter-terrorism expert and all-around tough guy.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

ILLIBERAL LIBERALS

Sir, – It is, of course, abundantly clear that censorship with regard to the *Tkuma* television series has already taken place.

Our culture czars, in their unjustified arrogance, have presented a one-sided and warped picture, deliberately denying the input of historians of a different approach.

There is also a question of timing. As I recall, we are presently celebrating our 50th jubilee, not not our 50th *yahrzeit*. The views of the new historians and their fellow-travelers may have their place in a talk show or documentary dealing with some specific aspect of Israeli history, but to force-feed us unseasoned pottage of unbalanced self-hatred at our party is an example of gross bad taste.

Unfortunately, we once again learn that there is none so illiberal as an Israeli so-called liberal.

LOUIS GARB

Jerusalem.

STAR SPORT

Sir, – I would liked to request through your paper that the cable TV company returns the Star Sport channel to our screens. As a rugby and cricket fan, I am sure I speak for thousands of fans living in Israel.

Star Sport was the only way we could maintain our link with the games that we love.

L. GREENMAN

Deganya Beit.

IAF ATTITUDES

Sir, – I am the father of a Cobra pilot who, along with his navigator, miraculously escaped death in a training crash.

I believe the IAF should seriously consider changing its macho attitude to a more cautious and mature approach concerning malfunction of the craft.

Unlike a fighter plane that needs a long smooth runway, the helicopter can set down almost anywhere. When not in battle, I feel it is no shame for the pilot to land the chopper for inspection at the first sign of serious trouble and be towed back to the base if need be.

I for one would not think him any less a man, and I'm sure many precious lives and expensive helicopters would be saved and the recent tragic accident perhaps averted.

NAME WITHHELD

KUDOS TO ARENS

Sir, – Accolades and kudos are due to Moshe Arens for his most excellent article "No contrition, lots of chutzpah" (March 27). Seldom have I read so accurate a description of British obtuseness, treachery and inhumanity to man. By presenting relevant data dispassionately in the best of scholarly tradition he has won my unqualified admiration and respect.

PROF. MARGE E. LANDSBERG

Haifa.

SOUL-SEARCHING

Sir, – Moshe Arens, in criticizing Robin Cook in his article "No contrition, lots of chutzpah" (March 27), fails to take into account the "second" part of the Balfour Declaration.

Yes, Britain supported the establishment of a national home for the Jewish people, but here in Israel we tend to avoid the next proviso: "it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities..."

History does indeed have an important part to play but we cannot remain "bogged-down" by past injustices. Lord Balfour also once said that there is not enough justice to go around. Arens asks for some soul-searching from Britain. Should we not, as Jews who suffered, and know the true meaning of the word, do some soul-searching of our own?

LILLIAN COHEN

Kfar Monash.

'BILADI, BILADI'

Sir, – On the 50th anniversary of the State of Israel, the decision to show on state television – "objectively" – the history of Palestinian murderous terrorism is a national scandal, which indicates the sick, masochistic and anti-Zionist conception of the *Tkuma* program producers.

DR. DAN HETH

Netanya.

FROM OUR ARCHIVES

65 years ago: On April 10, 1933, *The Palestine Post* reported on the arrival of the first transatlantic liner, the s.s. Vulcania, to anchor at the new Harbor of Haifa. The vessel, with a displacement of 24,000 tons, brought about 1,000 passengers from Europe and America, including 180 immigrants.

25 years ago: On April 10, 1973, *The Jerusalem Post* reported that Arab terrorists in Nicosia blasted the ground floor of the Israeli Ambassador's residence and, in an almost simultaneous action, tried to hijack an Arkia Viscount jet. This attack was foiled by the Israeli security men and Cypriot guards, who shot two of the assailants dead and wounded another. A Cypriot police guard was killed.

Alexander Zvielli

POSTSCRIPTS

WHEN IT comes to contests, Lady Luck has smiled a lot on Barbara Howard, grandmother of 13, retired factory worker and inveterate contest participant from Richmond, Kentucky. Her recent winnings include diamond earrings, a go-cart and a washing machine.

But all that pales beside the jackpot Howard won recently: a full-sized, living-color replica of the house Bart Simpson and his animated, television sitcom family call home.

Just like the TV version, the 2,200-square-foot house has four bedrooms, two bathrooms and a pair of bay windows in front, plus a tree house and a barbecue in back. Only trouble is, it's in Henderson, Nevada, near Las Vegas but far from the farm where Howard's husband, J.B., raises cows, ostriches and tobacco.

"Honey, I'd give my eyeteeth to pick up and move there, but I can't," Howard said after inspecting the house. It was first prize in a promotion sponsored by Fox Broadcasting and a builder, Kaufman and Broad Home Corp.

The home is orange, yellow and tomato red stucco outside, with high-octane colors such as pink flamingo, wild carnation and generator green inside. The palette is a precise match of the cartoons, and so is the decor, right down to Homer's Duffbeer cans, Marge's corncob kitchen curtains and the faux peanut butter and jelly sandwich under Bart's perpetually unmade bed. There's even food for the cat.

The decorator, Rick Floyd, is a Hollywood set designer. He made or found the more than 2,000 Simpson knickknacks that give the house its verisimilitude.

What about Homer's purple car? "A woman drove it past me in Las Vegas, and I drove after her honking until she pulled over. She sold it to us for $700," Floyd said.

A FIFTH-grade honor roll student was expelled after she picked up her mother's lunch box by mistake and brought a paring knife to school.

When 10-year-old Shanon Borchardt Coslett found the knife, she immediately reported it to a teacher at her school in Longmont, Colorado.

"I saw this thing sticking out, and I gave it to my teacher. She said it was very serious," said Shanon, sobbing.

Her mother keeps the knife in her lunch box to slice apples.

Administrators said the law required them to expel the girl.

"If I had a choice I never would have expelled her," administrator Dorothy Marlatt said. "I hurt for the girl."

"She's very upset. She loves school," said Shanon's stepfather. "She just got on the honor roll last week."

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, your honor.

Leroy Howard Murray won't easily forget the date he broke into a car and stole a $1,440 stereo system – since it's the birthday of the judge who tried him.

He better not, anyway.

As part of Murray's probation, Judge Sheryl Dorney ordered him to send her a birthday card this year and next, to remind him of his crime.

Dorney also sentenced him to 23 months probation and restitution to the owner of the car.

هكذا من الاصل

A Pessah reminder

NAOMI CHAZAN

The power of the Pessah story, recounted tonight in Jewish homes throughout the world, speaks to generation after generation because its powerful message demonstrates the universalistic meaning of the Jewish heritage. Pessah is not only a celebration of the Israelites' extraordinary escape from bondage; it is also, by extension, an annual opportunity to assess the degree of freedom and justice elsewhere, both for members of our own communities (as many people did for years regarding Soviet Jewry) and for other peoples throughout the world.

To those who take these historical and religious obligations seriously, this year's celebration will necessarily be a somber and muted one. For too long, Israel has severely assailed the norms of human dignity and liberty it values so highly by thrusting upon many of the state's non-Jewish citizens versions of the very humiliation, deprivation, and injustice from which it celebrates its own liberation on Pessah.

Rather than embodying the lessons learned as oppressed Israelites, too many Jews have allowed themselves to forget that the Haggada commands us to see ourselves as if we were enslaved by Pharaoh and to commit ourselves to constantly lead the struggle against all forms of subjugation.

Israel's treatment of its Arab citizens is a measure of its humanity, democratic character, and commitment to the Jewish values of justice and tolerance

In this context, how can we explain the destruction of the homes of three Beduin families in Umm al-Sahali last Thursday? Even if Israel truly has a vital interest in destroying these illegally built homes now (an extremely specious claim), how can one justify surprise demolition, and why are residents being offered full compensation for their homes, temporary housing, and – most curiously – an opportunity to keep the land in their possession for agricultural use? What is the Interior Ministry trying to prove?

The actions of the police in dealing with the subsequent demonstration only magnified the problem. The use of undue force – verging on brutality – against these Israeli citizens (many of whom serve in the military) only brought additional humiliation to unsuspecting residents and further harmed the already delicate relationship between Jews and Arabs in the country.

This most recent demonstration of Israel's oppressive attitude toward its Arab citizens, however, is just the tip of the iceberg, the latest event in a dismal 50-year bipartisan record of neglect, ignorance, and insensitivity. The policy toward "unrecognized" Arab villages is but one of the many injustices.

In recent months, and in the face of a severe housing shortage cutting across the Arab population, the government has been scrambling to implement a wide variety of measures to further restrict Arab citizens' right to live where they please. With the blessing and encouragement of National Infrastructure Minister Ariel Sharon, vast tracts of land are being handed over to a tiny number of Jews to establish private farms in the Negev. Claims of Jews who staked out small parcels of land in Galilee by building homes or businesses are being recognized retroactively. While nearly half the illegal construction in the country is carried out by Jews, 90 percent of the buildings destroyed belong to Arabs.

NOTWITHSTANDING the blatant hypocrisy of recognizing the illegal claims of Jews while razing Arab homes, the language of these transactions is both anachronistic and virulently discriminatory. The deal currently in the works between Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu and Jewish Agency Chairman Avraham Burg would transfer 100,000 dunams (25,000 acres) from the state to the Jewish Agency, which can make allocations only to Jews in the name of "redeeming" and "Judaizing" land that is "occupied."

An Arab couple was recently denied the right to purchase a home in the Jewish settlement of Katzir, in the Galilee, by transferring the land to the Jewish Agency. The High Court, inexplicably shirking its responsibility to uphold the equal rights of all citizens, refused to rule in this case. In Nazareth, there is nowhere left to build, but when Arabs expressed interest in the "build your own home" project slated for Upper Nazareth, the project was canceled altogether. A state that protects and cares for all its citizens equally would never carry out and justify land policies like these.

These high-profile, anti-democratic actions may grab headlines, but the day-to-day impact of similarly-oriented policies in other spheres generally fails to attract the attention of the Jewish majority.

Even as grave weaknesses are revealed in the Jewish educational systems, the situation in Arab schools is far worse. Inattention and lack of funding often translate into poor teaching and a severe paucity of basic resources, such as textbooks – not to mention computers. The gross disparities between the math scores of Arab and Jewish students nationwide, released last week, testify to the results of this neglect.

Israel's treatment of its Arab citizens is a measure of its humanity and its democratic character, as well as its commitment to the Jewish values of justice and tolerance. Unless these values, which receive so much attention at this time of year, are experienced on a daily basis by all citizens, Israel is neither fulfilling its basic responsibility to all its citizens nor its obligations to its Jewish inheritance. One cannot berate non-Jewish citizens for failing to exhibit enthusiasm during the country's jubilee celebrations when the state has failed them.

Similarly, justice for Palestinians across the Green Line is an indicator of our understanding of the importance of our own freedom and independence. Failure to implement peace agreements and continued provocation in the form of settlement expansion and land expropriation must be evaluated in these terms as well.

On the eve of Pessah, as Israeli Jews are preparing to commemorate and celebrate our ancestors' successful struggle for self-determination and justice, we must also heed the concomitant, universal obligation of the holiday. All Israelis must use this opportunity to educate themselves about these modern-day injustices and reaffirm their obligation to take concrete action to assure that others within our midst enjoy the privileges for which the Jewish people have struggled so arduously throughout their own history. Otherwise, this millennia-old holiday has little meaning.

The poor bread of Pessah

JONATHAN ROSENBLUM

Tonight Jewish families all around the world – in many cases three generations together – will gather to celebrate the Seder. No holiday so centers around the family, and that is as it should be, for the Seder is about the transmission of historical memory from one generation to another. The primary commandment of the night is relating the story of the Exodus: "And you shall tell your son on that day, saying..."

We do not just recount past events; we relive them. The leader of the Seder tells his children his personal exodus – "on account of what the Lord did for *me* in *my* going out from Egypt." The purpose of the Seder has not been fulfilled, in the words of the Haggada, until "each person views himself as if he himself left Egypt."

In the cycle of the Jewish calendar, we stop at various "stations" in time. On Seder night, for example, we can tap into the same spiritual potential that our ancestors experienced at the first Seder in Egypt. Through our questions and answers at the Seder, through the recall of our degradation and our subsequent redemption, we attempt to rediscover for ourselves the meaning of events over 3,000 years ago.

The Exodus was accompanied by an unprecedented revelation. God revealed Himself, through the plagues in Egypt, as the all-powerful creator and master of nature.

Even more important, He showed that He is directly involved in human history, and that history has a goal and a purpose. Unless there is meaning and purpose to the world, God's very act of choosing to remove one nation from the midst of another more numerous and powerful nation is unintelligible.

The initial illumination did not last. Like a bolt of lightning on a dark heath, it lit up the ultimate destination while leaving us to find our way in the obscuring darkness. But a residue of that illumination remains, and it is particularly strong on Seder night.

We relive the Exodus both as a nation and as individuals. As members of the Jewish nation, we strive to experience the Exodus personally; as individual Jews we experience our personal Exodus.

On a national level, exile involves loss of our national identity. On the individual level, *galut* is expressed as estrangement from our essential self.

A slave cannot fulfill his potential because he is subject to the will of his master, and thus has no means of self-fulfillment. As a nation denied the ability to express our purpose, we could only slide into depravity in Egypt. And as individuals, we are enslaved so long as we are thrall to our physical desires.

Matza is at once the symbol of our freedom as a nation and of our spiritual essence as individuals

WITH the redemption from Egypt, we were elevated as a people above the constraints of time and space. The very name of Egypt – *Mitzrayim* – derives from *tzar*, meaning narrow or constricted. From the physical and spiritual strangulation of Egypt, we were redeemed in the flash of an eye.

Our parallel redemption as individuals requires transcending the constraints of our physical nature. Our soul – breath of the divine – finds expression in this world only through the medium of the physical body, yet frequently our physical side pursues its own agenda, and hides from our consciousness any awareness of the soul. To the extent that we perceive ourselves in purely material terms, we lose sight of the divine spark that is our true essence; we are alienated from ourselves.

Matza is at once the symbol of our freedom as a nation and of our spiritual essence as individuals. The entire story of the Exodus is told with the matza uncovered, for it symbolizes the Exodus by reminding us of the how God redeemed us in an instant.

And Matza is spiritual bread. The spiritual world is one of unity; the physical world one of division. The latter is made up of finite blocks of material amalgamated together and finite moments of time, one after the other, measured by changes in the physical world.

Matza reflects the essential unity of the world of the spirit. It is comprised only of that which is essential. The addition of any ingredient beyond water and flour renders it unfit to be eaten at the Seder.

No trace of *hametz*, the leavening agent in our daily bread, is permitted during Pessah. For *hametz* represents the material side of man, that which retards and impedes the soul from expressing itself. The Hebrew root of the *hametz* means to delay and slow down. Our sages portray the Jewish people as saying to God, "We seek to do Your will, but the leavening in the dough [figuratively, our evil inclination] prevents us from doing so."

Though the matza we eat in place of normal bread is referred to as "poor bread," it is we who are poor, not the bread. We are too rooted in the physical world to digest spiritual bread for more than one week a year.

Matza thus reminds us of the extent to which we have failed to elevate our physical body to the point where it can be an adequate vessel for our soul.

Tonight we rejoice at the Seder table after having searched out the *hametz* from every nook and cranny of our houses and burned whatever remained. May we similarly merit to search out and remove the *hametz* from within ourselves and thereby experience true freedom.

A happy and kosher holiday to all.

Middle Israel

AMOTZ ASA-EL

The wilderness bug

Having for decades seen and breathed nothing but European landscapes lush with lakes, rivers, and forests, my father hoped the scathingly arid land where he built his future would some day emulate the cruel lands which had consumed his past, by wearing a gown of greenery. "What's so pretty about this vista Sabras so much adore?" he once asked me in frustration, fanning his arm across the naked Judean Desert hills which rolled ahead of us, just north of Jerusalem, all the way to the Dead Sea.

Indeed, unlike the thickly wooded and oft-snow capped Carpathian, Sudeten, and Alpine ranges where he felt at home, my father's children and their friends matured while trekking through the Negev, Sinai, and Judean deserts.

As for the extent to which we truly adored those regions, the jury is still out.

Water-rich places like Wadis Darajeh, Mukalakh, or Ujah are a joy mainly because of the contrast they offer to an otherwise lifeless landscape. Landmarks like the cliff-hanging St. George or Carantal monasteries impress us because of the unique ladders they try to offer between man and God. And the appallingly parched, moon-scaped Sinai dunes of Bir-T'madeh, where we used to maneuver Centurion tanks while firing armor-piercing and crater-pounding shells into the yawning wilderness, are a geographic abomination which we happily relinquished at Camp David.

Just what have we and the desert done to each other since that traumatic Exodus experience?

Pretty or not, ever since our ancestors' Exodus from Egypt, the desert has loomed ominously as a metaphor for the Jewish enigma; whether escaping its wrath, embracing its solitude, or raping its virginity, our nationality was welded while in motion in an inhospitable land.

The constitutional convention, for instance, where the Israelites substituted Egypt's rule with God's, did not take place in an urban setting like the Americans' Philadelphia but on the open-air foothills of Mt. Sinai.

Future scholars, from antisemitic German sociologist Werner Sombart to haredi Rabbi Eliezer Shach, lent profound meaning to this formative experience. The former, in his *Die Juden und das Wirtschaftsleben*, while attributing various market malfunctions to the Jews, traced the origins of their famous geographic mobility and mercantile agility to their collective shaping as nomads in an infertile land.

The latter, when asked about the religious argument for a "greater Israel," reportedly retorted that for a people that received the Torah in the desert, land is of minor importance.

To be sure, while its participants generally resented that arduous 40-year hike from slavery to sovereignty, and missed their previous life in the water-abundant Nile valley, "when we sat by the flesh pot, and when we did eat bread to the full," there's no arguing their descendants emerged as history's ultimate nomads. Unlike the Beduin, who merely roam the expanses of the one desert into which they are born, Jewish communities have for centuries been prone to appear, disappear, and reappear almost anywhere, arguably belonging simultaneously everywhere and nowhere.

UNLIKE conventional wisdom, the foundations for a Jewish diaspora were not laid following Rome's conquest of Judea, but well before it, when Jews built homes, businesses, and synagogues around much of the Mediterranean's tri-continental basin. In fact, the reluctance to unambiguously embrace the Holy Land already accompanied much of the odyssey from Egypt to Canaan, whether in the spies' pessimistic report about the land's pregnability or in the choice of two-and-a-half tribes to settle in Transjordan.

Did the Promised Land's relative desolation play a role in this failure to effectively cling onto it? It must have. After all, even Abraham – the first oleh – at one point abandoned famine-struck Canaan. Even so, from the mist of the Exodus emerged a nation which was frequently averse to any territorial attachment, a nation which during three subsequent millennia was far more attached to the spiritual covenant its forebears were given upon their entry into the desert, than to the earthly inheritance which awaited them beyond it.

Still, as they sought to restore the Jews' attachment to their ancestral territory, Israel's predominantly European-born founding fathers counted the desert among their enemies, and sought to impose on it greenery, hospitability, and fertility.

Surely, this experiment had its famous success stories, from the creation of a southern bread basket irrigated with northern water to the emergence of boomtowns in Beersheba and Eilat. Yet the desert expanses which encompass the bulk of this country and which David Ben-Gurion sought to make its demographic center of gravity – stubbornly remain remote, barren and unpopulated.

Is that bad? Maybe the desert was meant to be the safety valve it's offered for centuries to political dissidents like the Saul-fleeing David, religious ascetics like the metropolis-disillusioned Essenes, or social outcasts like Elijah, who after failing to challenge Samaria's pagan elite nested in the Sinai?

Was the ambition to extract the desert from the heart of the Holy Land as unrealistic as the quest to create that New Jew who would abandon trade and embrace farming? Is there really a desert bug in our collective soul, one which sends our young adults obsessively backpacking anywhere between Nepal and Chile, while their software devising, financial-instrument brokering, or arms peddling parents are pollinating the global marketplace, like those mercantile bees which once were anathema to Zionist and antisemite alike?

Perhaps our modern experiment with sovereignty, development, and territorial repatriation wasn't meant to encompass much more than the coastal urban sprawl it effectively is. Maybe in order to reassert Jewish control of Jewish fate all we needed were a metropolis, economy, parliament, army, and just a bit of hinterland of our own? Maybe, in other words, the desert would have been better off if left untouched?

Now, in line with the desert's time honored role as a shelter for the recluse, author Meir Shalev in his latest novel sculpts a disillusioned Middle Israeli who escapes to the desert from Jerusalem's infamous wrath. Does this herald a new chapter in the love-hate relationship between desert and Jew, one in which Ben-Gurion's soul-searching heirs cuddle in the desert's bosom like domesticated wildcats?

For more on that, stay tuned for the second Zionist century.

When the critics outnumber the faithful

GERALD M. STEINBERG

In every generation, the Jewish people relive the Exodus from Egypt, putting ourselves in the position of the slaves, suddenly freed and beginning their march into the desert. The Haggada, which provides a guidebook for this exercise, is full of songs and rejoicing over the miraculous event.

However, the Seder, with its singing and celebration, is far from complete, and may even be misleading. The Haggada tells us about the suffering of the slaves, and then about how later generations of Jews viewed the Exodus. There is almost no information about how the men, women, and children who suddenly left Egypt at midnight viewed the unfolding events at the time.

If someone had conducted a public opinion poll at the time, the results would probably have shown a high level of anxiety and fear. Even following the signs and wonders of divine intervention, many would have been cautious and pessimistic. After generations of slavery and degradation at the hands of the most powerful nation in the Middle East, it was not easy to be very optimistic about the future.

After the team of Moses and Aaron took over (without elections) and initiated the confrontations with Pharaoh, conditions became worse. The pattern was set in the previous plagues; first Pharaoh announced that the Israelites were free to go, but as soon as the pressure abated, he changed his mind. After so many false starts, how many people actually believed that this time, the pattern would be broken?

Even after the dramatic midnight Exodus, any euphoria was short lived. A few days later, when facing the Red Sea, the massive army of former slaves stood terrified when they heard Pharaoh's chariots approaching. It took many generations until the historic magnitude of the Exodus began to be understood.

In the midst of our anxiety about the future, and while we celebrate the Exodus, we should take a step back to appreciate how much has been accomplished in modern Israel

Three thousand years later, and 50 years after the miraculous rebirth of Jewish sovereignty in Eretz Yisrael, many Israelis still view the future as bleak and uncertain. Like the Israelites after leaving Egypt and marching toward the Red Sea, today's Israelis are an anxious lot. The daily headlines predict imminent disaster, in the form of civil war between secular and religious, or a collapse of the peace process and the possibility of renewed regional warfare. Now, we have public opinion polls, and they show a lack of enthusiasm when it comes to the 50th anniversary of national independence.

On the talk shows and in newspaper columns, writers complain that the leadership is out of touch and incompetent. Binyamin Netanyahu is certainly no Moses, and there is no political figure to play the role of Aaron. Now, as in many other periods of Jewish history, the government suffers from a credibility gap, and the critics outnumber the faithful.

IN the midst of the storm, it is always very difficult to see clearly. In the grand sweep of Jewish history, 50 years is a very short time. This is clearly not enough to close the gaps between religious and secular views of the future of the Jewish people, to provide a new generation of qualified leaders, or to indicate a clear direction for the future.

However, if we take a broader view, removed from the daily news events, the picture looks very different. For the Jewish people, the creation of the State of Israel and its survival is the outstanding event of the past two millennia.

In the generations and centuries to come, these events will be seen as a central event of Jewish and world history, on the scale of the biblical Exodus. The past five decades can rightfully be compared with the miraculous Exodus from Egypt and the entry into the Promised Land. Not only did we survive, but we managed to overcome many barriers and to build a thriving economy.

In this half-century, the population of Israel has grown from 600,000 to 6 million. Millions of Jews have joined the ingathering, and the prisoners of Zion from the former Soviet Union have been freed to rejoin the Jewish people. They have been absorbed with far less strife and problems than anyone expected. Two heroes of this modern exodus, Natan Sharansky and Yuli Edelstein, are serving in the Israeli cabinet. This, in itself, clearly deserves to be classified as miraculous.

Jewish culture, which was on the verge of extinction 50 years ago, is being restored. The intense debates and conflict between different groups and perspectives are the inevitable consequences of this process. The revival of the Hebrew language, with its deep roots in the history and literature of the Jewish people, and associations with the Land of Israel, is an important accomplishment in itself. The transition from war and rejection to peace and acceptance, although unsteady and slow, is also a critical milestone.

None of this is going to change the long-standing Jewish traditions of worrying about the future, of criticizing our leaders, of whining and begging for divine intervention. However, in the midst of our anxiety attacks about the future, and while we consider the events of the Exodus from Egypt, we should take a step back to appreciate how much has been accomplished in the past 50 years.

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TRAVEL WITH THE EXPERTS

MARKETS

in brief

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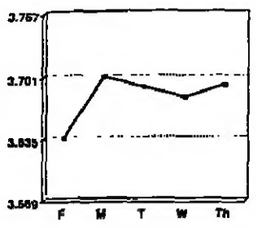

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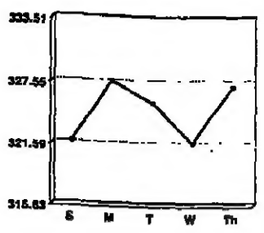
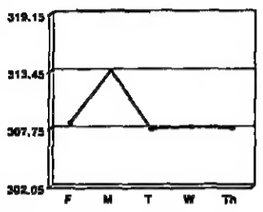
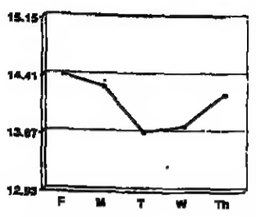


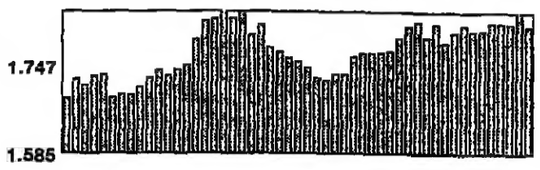
GOLD
$ per ounce



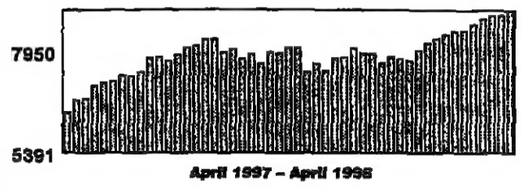
OIL
$ per barrel of brent crude



DOLLAR / DEUTSCHEMARK



DOW JONES INDUST. AVG.



BITS & BYTES

By NINA GILBERT

Comverse wins Deutsche Telekom contract

Comverse Technology has won a multi-year contract, estimated at $30 million this year, for the supply of systems for voice/fax mail services to Deutsche Telekom, the largest telecommunications company in Europe.

Comverse's subsidiary here is the Tel Aviv-based Efrat Technology, which does most of the company's development and production. The company is a leading supplier of enhanced messaging and information systems for wireline and wireless telephone operators to provide voicemail and other revenue generating services.

The service supplied to Deutsche Telekom is to offer a family mailbox option, in which multiple household members who share a single phone number can each have a personal, private mailbox.

Gilat makes $40m. private placement

Gilat Satellite Networks this week announced the signing of an agreement with a group of international investors for the private placement of its Global Village Telephone subsidiary.

The funds will be used for the deployment of rural telephony networks in developing countries, based on Gilat's DialAway VSAT technology, as well as for operating expenses and other corporate purposes.

The agreement stipulates co-ownership of Gilat's DialAway VSAT technology between Gilat and GVT. Upon closing, the investors will hold approximately 95 percent of the outstanding equity of GVT for an investment of $40 million, and Gilat will retain approximately 5% of GVT for an investment of $2.5m. The Petah Tikva-based Gilat produces Very Small Aperture Terminal (VSAT) satellite earth stations, hub equipment, and related software products.

MediaSonic gets funding from Singapore fund

MediaSonic announced this week that the Singapore Israel Industrial Research and Development Fund (SIIRD) has approved the funding for half of the company's $1.5 million Internet telephony project.

The application to SIIRD was made jointly with MediaSonic's strategic partner ACS Innovations of Singapore, which holds 25% of the privately owned company, established in 1993, with offices in Petah Tikva and a manufacturing facility in Yokne'am. Sales last year were about $6 million.

The funds are to be used for the further development of the company's telephony products.

ECI to supply Barak revenue protection systems

ECI Telecom, the Petah Tikva-based maker of telecommunications systems, has been chosen to supply a $2.2 million comprehensive revenue protection system by local long-distance provided Barak for its international exchange network.

The system will enable Barak to provide a variety of advanced services, such as Call Clarity level and fraud protection. It identifies abnormal telecommunications patterns which characterize fraud and enables advanced, real time, and flexible fraud management and prevention.

PIDC wins $8m. lottery system contract

PIDC, the Netanya-based software solutions company, has won an $8 million contract for a computer system for Colombia's lottery company, Lotto Lotin, and is negotiating for another $6m. project. The deal includes the main computer system and the 500 remote terminals, which are developed and manufactured here. The wireless communications between the computers the main system is to be supplied by Motorola.

The privately owned company was established in 1995 and has had annual growth of 400% to 500%.

Tower launches training course

Tower Semiconductor opened a high-tech training course this week at its plant in Migdal Ha'emek in conjunction with the Labor and Social Affairs Ministry. Sixteen jobless young people and new immigrants with technological backgrounds were accepted in the course, which is to last nine months.

Workers to present own bid in IEC 49% share offering

By DAVID HARRIS

Israel Electric Corporation workers together with domestic and foreign investors have prepared a bid to purchase 49 percent of the company when it is offered for sale in the coming months, according to workers' committee chairman Yoram Oberkovitz.

"We've been preparing for this for the last three years and we don't want to be taken by surprise by the games of all sorts of companies," said Oberkovitz yesterday.

He added that within the next week to 10 days he would announce the names of the business partners to the committee.

The estimated $6.5 billion required to purchase half the public utility is already in place, said Oberkovitz.

On Wednesday night at the annual pre-Pessah workers' meeting, union leaders told employees they would not allow the company to fall into the hands of anyone else.

Furthermore, the union will prevent any attempt to break up the industry over and above the government approved 10% of electricity production, which is being transferred to the private sector.

The workers are not against privatization, said the committee chairman. On the contrary, it is their decision to be a fundamental part of the privatization process, he said.

"I'm not afraid of privatization," Oberkovitz said. "We're going with it we want to be a part of it so that we can defend workers' rights."

The workers are entitled to 15% of shares as of right, according to Oberkovitz. Employees will then purchase an additional 10.1%, with the remainder being purchased by the committee's strategic partners, he said.

IEC was not prepared to comment on the suggestion that workers purchase a major stake in the company.

Moshe Leon, the director-general of the Prime Minister's Office, recently declared the government's intention to sell 49% of the monopoly.

During the workers' meeting, union leaders were joined by IEC's top brass in condemning the activities of the relatively new Public Utilities Authority - Electricity watchdog.

Oberkovitz, company Chairman Gad Ya'acobi and general manager Rafi Peled joined forces to accuse the PUA of attempting to restrict IEC's profitability and of displaying irresponsibility.

The PUA has succeeded in the courts in preventing IEC from increasing electricity prices – a decision IEC says it will take up at the government level.

1st quarter trade deficit falls 23%

By Jerusalem Post Staff

The trade deficit dropped 22.9 percent in the first quarter from $2.153 billion between January and March 1997 to $1.659b., the Central Bureau of Statistics reported yesterday.

During the quarter, however, exports to the Far East were down 25% on the same period last year.

Overall imports reached $6.93b., down 6.6% from the $7.42b. recorded in the first quarter last year, while exports increased 0.1% from $5.267b. to $5.27b.

The March trade deficit totaled $789.2 million, down some 10% from the $874.2m. the previous year. The March deficit was up on those for January ($340.5m.) and February ($530.2m) – a far more substantial increase than that seen in the first three months last year. Imports stood at $2.673b. last month, compared to $1.884b.

As far as East Asia is concerned, exports totaled $722.9m. in the first quarter, as against $967.7m. in the comparable months in 1997. The majority of that slump is being felt in the diamond industry, where exports slipped from $534.1m. in the first quarter last year to $361.2m. Imports from the region are only slightly down on last year, from $668.8m. to $649.7m.

During the first quarter exports were most significantly down to Thailand (-29.2%), Singapore (-28%), and South Korea (-22.6%). Official trade was also substantially down with Indonesia and Malaysia, but these count for a tiny fraction of Israel's exports to the Far East.

UDI, Tomen seal $100m. Romanian deal

By DAVID HARRIS

United Development Inc. and Tomen Corp. of Japan signed a $100 million contract on Wednesday to renovate one of Romania's major power plants, Tomen's representative here Yehuda Amit said yesterday.

The Grozavesti Electric & Thermal Power is the first independent power producing (IPP) plant in Romania.

The tender was awarded after three years of negotiations between the Romanians and UDI, which is owned by the Eisenberg family. In recent months the Japanese trading company agreed to come on board and as a result the deal was sealed, according to Amit.

UDI and Tomen will be responsible for improving the production of electricity and the piping controlling steam levels. Currently there are many infrastructure problems affecting production.

"This is one of the first IPPs in eastern Europe," said Amit. "This will be the first of many we hope," he said referring to the firm's intention to continue working with the Eisenberg group in the region.

Throughout eastern Europe there are many areas where the electricity infrastructure is in desperate need of upgrade.

While the deal was sealed on Wednesday, work will not begin until the financing has been secured. "This will take three to four months in all likelihood," said Amit, who heads ATI, Tomen's partner and representative company in Israel.

The Osaka-based company has purchased a 25 percent stake in the deal, with UDI also taking a 25% holding. The remainder will be held by Regia Autonoma de Electricitate, the state-owned power company.

Tomen is one of Japan's largest general trading companies. The company imports and exports a wide variety of products through its six divisions: metals, machinery, construction materials, food products, chemicals and fuels, and textiles.

Tomen's metals division accounts for the largest proportion of its sales, followed by the chemicals and fuels division. The company lost $158 million last year.

Tshuva completes Delek takeover

By DAN GERSTENFELD

Contractor Yitzhak Tshuva completed the takeover of Delek the Israel Fuel Corp. after agreeing yesterday to buy 37.6 percent of the petroleum company from Discount Investments for NIS 580 million.

The transaction came after both sides failed to finalize a previous agreement for the joint management of Israel's second largest petroleum company.

The Netanya based contractor, who acquired 50% of Delek earlier this year, agreed to pay Discount NIS 160 per share. The price is equal to the sum paid by Tshuva's company, Tashluz Assets, to Bank Hapoalim when it purchased 25% of Delek.

Tshuva will purchase the shares from Discount through his privately held company, Sharon-Tshuva Investments. The deal is expected to be finalized by the end of the year.

The terms call for Delek to distribute its 12.7% stake in Super-Sol, as a dividend to the former shareholders of Delek. After the move is finalized, Bank Hapoalim and Tashluz will sell their holdings in the retail chain to Discount for NIS 11.19 per share, a price which is 61 agorot below the share's closing price on Wednesday. Discount together with affiliate PEC Israel Economic Corp., hold about 25% of Super-Sol.

PM to hold meeting on R&D aid today

By NINA GILBERT

Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu is planning to meet today with Industry and Trade Ministry Natan Sharansky and Finance Minister Yaakov Neeman to discuss the lack of funds for high-tech research and development this year, the Industry and Trade Ministry said yesterday.

Sharansky had asked Netanyahu for an immediate meeting to solve the budgetary shortfall of NIS 700 million for industrial R&D this year.

Sharansky's request followed an emergency meeting of the Manufacturers Association this week in which representatives of 100 companies and Chief Scientist Orna Berry participated.

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April 24, Friday	Hyatt – Jerusalem, Breakfast	8:30 AM
April 26, Sunday	Sheraton Plaza – Jerusalem, Dessert	6:00 PM

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LEADING SHARES

	LAST	CHANGE*
Africa Hotels	390	0
Alnca Israel 0.1	23400	0
Alnca Israel 1	216500	0.2
Agan	13300	2.6
Agis	2560	-1.2
Al Paper Mills	12850	0.2
Al-Rov	2470	4.9
Azorim	2720	-0.4
Azorim Prop.	598	-0.5
Bank Leumi 0.1	679	0.6
Bezan	2910	0
Bayside 1	40000	1.5
Bayside 5	202100	0
Bezeq	1024	2.5
Blue Square	4010	3
Bromine	3560	3.1
Clal Electronics	56400	0.7
Clal Industries	1972	1.3
Clal Insurance	3920	3.1
Clal Israel 1	105.7	2.8
Dan Hotels	823	-1.5
Dankner	2180	7.3
Darban	841	0
Dead Sea Works 0.1	921	1.1
Delek 0.1	14070	1.5
Delek Car	580	0
Development Mort	22600	0
Discount Bank	418	1.9
Discount Inv.	10180	3.7
Elbit 0.003	1220	1
Elbit Imaging	3080	1.9
Elbit system	4950	2
Elco	2160	1.9
Elco Industries	3060	0
Electra	16040	0
Electra App	1540	-3.2
Elite Ind. 1	2350	1.7
Elite Ind. 5	12400	2.6
Elron 0.003	6650	2.7
FIBI 5	69100	0.9
First Int'l 1	58200	0
First Int'l 5	271800	-0.3
First Int'l Mort	53000	1.1
Formula	14480	4.6
General Bank	10700	-0.9
Granit Hacarmel	680	2
Hadarim Prop.	5770	0
Ham-Let	2480	0
Hapoalim 0.1	1026	1.5
Harel Mishmar 1	3600	4.2
Harel Mishmar 5	16410	1.8
I.D.B. Dev.	8040	1
I.D.B. Holdings	7840	0.4
ILDC	2040	0
Ind Bldgs	629	1.1
Israel Chemicals	456	1.3
Israel Corp. 1	24600	-0.8
Isrotel	775	9.7
Jalora	750	0
JCT	32	-0.3
JEC	1994	2.2
Kitan	400	-1
Krafiam	4400	0.2
Koor	47000	1.5
Leader	1440	-0.7
Leumi Insurance	226	2.6
Leumi Mortgage	86000	3.1
Liraz	5050	-0.6
Makhteshim	3210	3.1
Maman	563	0
Matav	4100	-0.5
Mehadrin	13300	1.7
Mei Eden	1377	-3.1
Melissaron	1050	0
Menorah Ins. 1	1510	2.8
Milomor	1648	0
Mishkan	64500	1.4
Mizrahi Inv.	11500	0
NATSVA REGULAR	1268	-0.2
Nice Systems	16970	-0.7
Ocif	7980	0
Orbit	1980	-3
Ormat Industries	482	0
Osem Industries	1598	2.9
Petrochemicals	2150	4.2
Phoenix Ins. 1	5900	3.4
Poalim Inv.	13020	1.2
Prop & Bldg	26000	1.2
Sall Industries	2000	-4
Solel Bone	4780	0
Supersol	1210	2.5
Tadiran	16800	2
Tambour	750	-2.7
Tefahot	187000	0.9
Tempo	1950	-1.8
Tevel	15680	1.5
Urdan	288	3.5
Wire and Cables	1371	1.8
Ytong Industries	880	0

KARAM
SMALL CAPITALIZATION TASE ISSUES

	LAST	CHANGE*
Boulous GD	369	0
Abyac	2.4	0
Abudi	58.5	0
Ace-Spada	86	-2.3
Ackerstein Bond B	181	0
Ackerstein Ind.	368	0.3
Ackerstein Zvi 1	1298	0
Ackerstein Zvi 5	5570	0
Adakom	36.5	0
Adanim	369248	9.7
Adler	113.5	0
Adika	132	-3.2
Adumim	189	0
Africa Hotels Bond B	87.2	0.2
Africa Hotels Warrant 2	57.7	0
Africa Hotels Warrant 3	3.9	-2.5
Africa Israel Hotels Bond A	129.5	-0.7
Afeek Ind	2133	0
Agis Warrant 3	42	0
Agis Warrant 4	800	0
Agish Int'l	338	-0.8
Agri Investments	243	-3.2
Al-Ben	144.5	0
Al-Ben Bond A	114	0
Alha c2	103	0.5
Alha w6	163.7	5.3
Alliance	779	-1.2
Alon	280	0
Alony-Hetz	546	2.9
Alony-Hetz Bond A	255	-2.4
Alrod	198	0
Alrod Warrant 1	7.3	0
Alrov Bond D	78.5	0
Alrov Warrant 5	328	0
Aluma	163.5	10.1
Alomil	5815	-1
Amgar	182.5	0
Amitec	253	-0.7
Ammed Warrant 1	15	17.2
Acmat	582	0
Ampa Investments	129092	0
Analytic EMS	1385	0
Angel Trade	38.2	0
Angel Trade Bond A	150	0
Angel Trade Bond B	109	0.9
Angel Trade Bond C	61	0
Angel Trade Warrant 2	1.4	0
Apcon	684	0
Apcon warrant 1	298	-1
Applicom	2500	-4
Aracell Warrant 2	392	13.8
Arad	1920	0
Arad Towels	883	-0.2
Arazim	83	1.2
Arazim Bond 1	236	0
Argaman	250	0.8
Arladan	998	-2.7
Arpal	448	-10
Aryt	128	3.2
Ashkelon Plywood	700	0
Ashkelon Plywood Bond 1	228	0
Ashkelon Plywood Bond 2	127	0
Ashlad	448	-3
Ashlad Bond A	148.5	0.3
Ashot	301	0
Ashot Bond A	188.5	0.9
Ashpara	80.5	0
Ashtrom Bond 1	185	-1.2
Ashtrom Bond 2	152.5	0
Ashtrom Ind.	512	0
Ashtrom Prop.	204	0
Astrom P Bond 1	89	0
Astrom p warrant 8	37.5	-3.1
Astrum Bond C	93	0.5
Astrum Warrant 2	30	0
Atlon	80.5	0
Atmor	1917	0
ATX	171.5	-0.9
ATX Bond A	150	0
Atzmon	275	-0.4
Aura	4690	3
Avarot	370	1.1
Avarot Bond A	156	0
Averbuch Formica	533	-0.3
Aviv	429	-2.1
Aviv Bond 1	148.5	0.3
Aviv Bond 2	89.5	0.8
Avner	1.8	0
Avrot Bond 2	89	-0.8
Avrot Warrant 2	57.8	8.2
Avalon	518	0
Azrath	476	5.5
Azorim Properties Bond 3	171	0
Azorim Warrant A	620	0
Azorim Warrant B	528	0
Badash Bond 1	45.4	0
Bacili	330	-0.9
Balentine 1	269	-0.4
Balentine Bond A	121	1.7
Balentine Warrant 2	10.8	0
Balron	3122	10
Bama'asal	93.5	0
Bama'asal Bond A	135	-0.4
Bar	326	0
Bar Bond A	118	0.4
Barac	274	0
Baranowitz	760	1.1
Barkan	702	-1
Baraz	122	-0.4
Beral	130.5	0
Baumel Mosho	163.5	0
BaySide Bond 2	86.5	0
BaySide Warrant D	2350	0
Beit Shemesh	1560	-1.3
Belmon	223	-2.2
Ben Yakar Bond A	171	0
Ben Yakar Bond B	91.5	3.4
Ben Yakar Gat	4809	0.5
Ben Yakar Warrant 2	28.3	0
Berman	150	0.6
Bio	979	0
Bliv Bond A	153.5	0
Bonus	546	0
Brl	262	-0.4
Bolos Bond B	75	0
bolos gad warrant 1	45.9	2
Bonei Tichon	529	0
Bonjour	459	0
Boulous Brothers	143.5	0
Boulous Brothers Bond 1	251	0
Boulous GD Bond A	127	0

	LAST	CHANGE*
Brand	96.5	0
Brill	87.5	0
Brok Side	29.3	-0.3
Bromo	108.5	0
Building Bank	1933	4
Building Resources	3384	2.5
C Holdings	609	16.3
C Holdings Bond 5	101	6.9
C Holdings Warrant 3	8	37.9
Caesarea 1	5351	-3
Caniel	3110	-1
Capital	904	0
Capital Bond A	117.5	0
Caprica	411	0
Cargal	745	5.4
Carmel	578	0
Carmiel	537	0
Castro	555	-0.7
Catalena 1	483	-9.9
CDI	204	-2.4
Cemental	535	-0.7
Centra	109	5.8
Centre Bond 1	128.5	-0.4
Chem	649	4.9
Citron Computers	148	2.5
Chemagal	440	0
Chim-Nir	508	-1
Cl Systems	227	0
Cidalb	171	-2
Clal Computer Warrant 3	243	130
Clal Computers	14220	4.4
Clal Industries Bond	206	-0.5
Clal Israel 5	486	0.4
Clal Retail	56871	0
Cohen Beni	195	0
Cohen Dev.	210	3.8
Cohen MM	131.5	-9.9
Cold Storage 1	1450	0
Cold Storage 5	8200	9.7
Cold Storage and Supply Bond 1	260	2
Compl	215	-1.4
Compl Warrant 1	13	0
Compulite	180	0
Comtech	417	0
Contrans	1018	0
Contal	985	1.5
Contractors	19795	0
Coral Beach	880	0
Credit Line	3.5	0
Credit Line Bond A	34.3	0
Cyclone 1	1912	0
Cyclone Bond 1	235	0
Cyclone Bond 2	148	0.3
Dafron	1598	-0.5
Dafron Bond 1	240	0.4
Dalia	2.5	0
Dan Rent-A-Car	788	4.9
Dan Rent-A-Car Bond A	158	0
Danber 1	4000	0
Danber 5	10170	9.8
Danber Bond A	263	0
Danber Resources	[illegible]	0
Danber Resources Bond B	161.5	0
Danber Tech.	8700	12.1
Danber Technologies Bond A	158.5	0
Danel	55	0
Danel Bond A	89	0
Danel Personnel	2600	-1.5
Danel Warrant 2	560	0
Dankner Bond 1	202	-5.9
Dankner Bond 2	137.5	0
Dankner Bond 3	[illegible]	0.1
Dankner Warrant C	686	0.2
Dankner Warrant D	1.1	-96.5
Danty	835	0
Darad	97.5	-3
DARBAN BOND 2	97.5	0.2
Darban Bond A	[illegible]	0
DARBAN W2	193	-5.5
Darban Warrant 3	122.7	0
Darea	729	-1.2
Darton	119	0
Dash Investment	890	3.4
Data	532	0.9
Decision Systems	380	-5
Degem Systems	575	1.2
Delek Drillings	3	0
Delek Oil	1503	-1
Delta 1	3480	2.3
Delta 5	10180	1.8
Destiny	1120	0
Digal	136	-8.1
Dirom 1	1784	0
Dolav	391	0
Dolav Bond A	133	0
Dolav warrant 1	50	0
Donalcar	445	-0.9
Donalcar Bond	148.5	0
Dor Chim	387	0
Dorot w1	124	0
Dorot	57.5	0.9
Dorot c1	97.1	-0.1
Dori Engineering	485	0
Dori Engineering Bond A	140.5	2.2
Dovrat Bond A	131.5	0
Dovrat Shrem	1321	3.1
Dovrat Shrem Warrant 3	88	7.9
DSI	149	0
Dubek M	2.1	0
Dubek 5	2	0
Duplitz	281	1.8
DYG Industries	480	0
E & M Computing	1191	-3
Edgar Albani	89.5	0
Edgar Industries	198	-2.5
Edgar Inv. Bond C	84	0
Edgar Inv. Warrant 5	30	13.3
Eder Bond A	96	0
Eini	210	0
Elam	328	0
El Bad	1896	0.1
El Cadi	842	0
El Cadi Bond 1	184	1.3
Elad	484	0
Elad Bond A	189	1.2
Elad Bond B	139	0.4
Elad c8	88	0
Elad w8	40.9	0
Elbit Computers Bond B	123	0.7
Elbit Computers Warrant 2	741	0
Eldan Tech.	179.5	1.1
Electronics Line	448	0.2
Elgar	4574	0
Elishar	364	0
Eltach Ind.	801	0
Elnam	340	4.1
Elia	487	0
Elia Bond A	142	0.4
Elran	3839	-2
Elron Warrant 2	2760	5.2
Emek	127	0
Emyle	868	0
Engel Const.	769	-0.1
ESE	2100	1.9
Eshed Robotech	229	-0.4
Etam	401	1
Evergreen	3240	-0.3
Excelence	2119	0
Export Inv.	828	0
Extra	183	8.2
Feldman	187	0
Feldman Bond A	146.5	0.8
Feldman Ind.	179.5	0
Feldman Warrant 3	17.9	0
Fertilizers 1	121.5	0
Feuchtwanger 1	12810	-0.3
Feuchtwanger 5	57800	1.4
Fidelli	2635	0
Five J Jewelers	266	0.8
Five J Jewelers Bond 2	124	0
Formica Source	194	0
Frutarom	302	-0.3
Gahelet	17710	1.8
Galcom	272	1.9
Galram	1225	0
Gama	211	0
Gamatronic	532	-0.7
Gambit	1512	0
Gan Shmuel Bond A	122.1	0
Gan Shmuel Warrant 3	548	0
Gan Shmuel	1495	2.5
Genel Hader	380	0
Gap Development	108	0
Gap Holdings	271	-2.5
Gap Warrant 2	5.5	0
Gazit	595	0
Gazit Bond B	147.5	0
Gazit Bond C	119.5	0
Gibor Bond 1	65	0
Gibor Bond A	83.5	0
Gibor Sabrina	62	0
Gibor Sport	720	0
Gibor Warrant 2	113.9	6.6
Gilboa	129.5	8.7
Gilo	136.5	0
Gilrek	1405	-2
Givot Olam Oil	100	0
Glob Rit	880	0
Golam	580	0.2
Gold	479	0
Golden House	346	0
Golden House Bond 1	238	0.4
Golex	155	5.1
Granit Bond	144.5	-0.2
Granit Bond 2	144	0
Green Bottwine	429	1.7
Greenberg	721	-2.4
H. Electronics	85.5	0
H. Mer	976	-1
Habas	2897	-2.5
Habas Bond 1	130	0
Hadar 1	19946	1.2
Hadar 5	60898	-0.5
Hadar Ins. 1	889	7.9
Hadar Ins. 5	3600	7.8
Hadarim Bond1.	108	0
Hadarim Warrant1	980	3
Hagal	372	0
Hagal Bond B	154	0
Hamakor	355	-0.8
Hanel	7.4	0
Harel Bond A	435	-3
Hasin Esh	632	0
Hason	183	0
Hatehof 1	211	0
Hatehof Bond A	141	0
Hed Arzi Music	357	0
Hiron 1	10456	-2.3
Hiron 5	42197	0
HL Service Bond 2	176.5	0
HL Service Bond 3	141	0.4
HL Services	1918	0
Hod	135.5	0
Hof	841	0
Holit	133.5	0
Hydrolics	154.5	4
IES Industries	565	0
IES Warrant 1	84.5	0
Ilan Gat	145.5	0
Ilan Gat Bond A	140.5	0.4
ILDC Bond 5	251	0
ILDC Hotels	405	0
ILDC Hotels Bond 1	165	0
ILDC Hotels Warrant 2	73	2.8
ILDC Insurance	319	0
ILDC Insurance Bond A	130	1.2
Imco	1308	0
Ind Bld Warrant 3	89.9	3.4
Ind Bldgs R1	34.8	2.3
Ind.Dev.Bank C	285	0.4
Ind.Dev.Bank CC	2800	1.4
Ind.Dev.Bank CC 1	2800	1.4
Ind.Dev.Bank Pref	1863	-1.3
Independence Mort	95026	0
Intercosma	797	0
Intergamma 1	4450	0
Intergamma 5	15784	-0.5
Iscal	1773	2.7
Ispro	3570	0
Isracolor	410	-1.9
Israel Corp. 5	108000	-0.9
Israel Lighterage Bond 3	136.5	0.4

	LAST	CHANGE*
Israel Wire & Cables Bond C	177	0
Isralom	1262	-1.3
Isralom Bond B	256	0
Isralom Bond C	85.5	0
Isramco	3.3	-3
Issta 1	5560	0
Issta 5	26000	0
Issta Bond A	240	-2.1
ISTA LINES	2034	0
Jalora Bond A	180	0
Jaycour	167	0
Jaycour Bond A	107.5	0
JEC Bond B	91.5	0
Jerusalem Mort	199.1	0
Jerusalem Mortgage Bond 16	158	0
Jeunesse	30.2	0
JOEL	108.5	0.5
JOEL Bond 1A	228	0
JOEL Bond 2	121.5	0
JOEL Bond A	228	0
JOEL Warrant 3	2.7	0
Kadmani	138.5	0
Kadouri	258	4.6
katrice bond b	88	0.6
katrice warrant 1	87.5	-30
Kaviri	1156	0
Kalkalit Bond A	95.3	0
Kalkalit warrant 2	318	4.4
Kamour	573	0
Kamour Bond G	128	0.4
Kameam	994	1.4
Kamur Warrant G	1.2	-8.3
Kanicol	36.9	-10
Kanicol Bond A	49.4	0.2
Kardan 1	430	0
Kardan 5	1992	-0.2
Katz	128	0
Katz Bond A	84	0
Kedem Chemicals	3720	-0.8
Kedem Chemicals Bond 2	229	0
Kentex	354	0
Kesher	788	0
Kesher Bond A	146.5	0
Keter	562	0
Kind	15.3	0
Kind Bond A	29.1	0
King	332	0
Kinneret	226	0
Kisch Kirur	164	0
Kishrei Teufa	1027	0
Kitel	455	-7.5
Kitel Bond A	192	0
Kitel Bond A	111.5	0
Kitel Warrant 1	3.5	-36.4
Kill Ind. 5	7450	-0.7
Koor Bond 5	161.6	1.4
Kopel	224	0.4
Kopel Bond 1	234	0
La Nationale Bond A	149	0
La Nationale Pref	94	0
Lachish	3670	0
Lamont	902	0
Lapidot Oil Exploration	1.4	0
Lapidot Oil Explores	73.5	0
Lasers	434	-0.2
Laviav	631	5
Laznick Bldg	477	0
Laznick Comm Ctrs	145	8.8
Laznick Commercial Centres Bon	127.5	4.9
Laznick Ind Bldgs	332	0
Laznick Industrial Bldgs. Bond	132.5	0
Leader Warrant B	86.5	-7
Lego	380	-1.8
Leumi R4	88.3	4.3
Leventhal	347	0
Levi	500	0.6
Levi Bond A	134	0
Levi Bond B	84	1.2
Levi Warrant 2	60	[illegible]
Levinstein Bond A	86	0
Levinstein Warrant 2	413	0
Levinstein	1170	0
Liber	393	0
Liden	1328	2.9
Lilshir 1	158.5	-0.6
Lilshir 5	848	-0.3
Ligad	699	-2
Ligad Bond 1	183	0
Lighterage 1	483	0
LIMS	242	0
Lipman	2730	5.5
Lipski	2690	0
Lipski Bond A	168.4	-0.1
Liraz Bond A	178	0
Lodan	170	-2
Lodzia 1	1419	2
Lodzia 4	5197	2
Luhot Gali	38	0
Luhot Gali Bond 1	138.5	0
Lumir	3355	10
Ma'ariv	2300	0
Ma'ariv Bond A	124	0.6
Maabarot	1240	0
Macpell	1219	0
Macpell Bond A	131.4	0
Macpell Bond B	121	-0.4
Macpell Bond C	78.5	0.6
Macpell Warrant 3	141	0
Mall	869	-1.3
Magam	164	0.3
Magam Bond A	174	0
Magam Bond B	122.5	0
Magav	300	-1
Magna	46.2	0
Magna Warrant 1	1	0
Magor 1	1970	-1
Magor 5	5670	0
Magor hldgs. Bond B	82	0
Magor hldgs. Warrant 2	588	0
Magor hldgs. Warrant A	19.4	0
Malal	389	2.8
Malibu 1	800	3.6
Malibu 5	3590	3
Malibu Bond B 1	172.8	-2.7
Malia	864	0
Man	99.5	3.1
Man Bond A	229	0
Manter	38	-10
Marathon	113.4	2.1
Marathon Insured	117	0.9
Mario Laznick Constr. Bond 1	167	0.9
Mario Laznick Constr. Bond 2	146	3.9
Maritime Bank	1890	1
Maritime Bank Bond A	198.5	0
Maritime Bank Bond B	135	0
Mashav	902	-0.5
Mashbir	822	1
Mashov	687	5.3
Mashov	130.5	0
Mashov Marketing Warrant 1	8.7	0
Matam	1318	0
Matav Warrant 1	514	-8.1
Maxima 1	329	0
Maxima 5	1470	0
Mazpak	651	0
Med. Hotels	72	-6.2
Medtechnica	779	0
Medtechnica Bond A	128	0
Medtechnica Bond B	78	0
Medtechnica Warrant 2	195	-11.3
Mediterranean Hotels Bond A	108	0
Megason	57.5	0
Meimad	415	0
Meir Ezra	3410	0.4
Meir Ezra Bond B	239	0.4
Melel	371	0
Melissaron Bond B	86.1	0
Melissaron Warrant 3	80	-5.6
Mendelson	239	-0.8
Menofim	68	2.6
Menorah Ins. 5	7100	4
Mercazit	726	0
Mercazit Warrant 2	89.5	0
Meitav	185	0
Meytavit	450	0
Middle East Tube	395	-2
Middle East Tube Bond A	108	0.9
Middle East Tube Warrant 2	24	0
Millomor Bond A	145	-1.4
Millomor Bond B	78	0
Millomor Warrant 2	275	0
Minrav	130.5	0
Mini Lilas	555	-1.9
Minrav	12500	4
Mirage	218	-0.9
Mirage Bond A	130	0.4
Mirage Warrant 1	31.5	0
Mirasol	60	0
Mishnael	19	0
Mishnael Bond B	58	0
Mishor Bond 2	151	4.1
Mishor Hahof	359	-1.9
Miterani	132	-4
Mivtach Shamir	2970	4
Mivtach Shamir	1160	0
MM Engineering	182.5	6.6
MM Engineering Bond A	113	-1.3
Modgal	709	0
Mod'in	2	11.1
Mollet	217	1.4
Moffat Convertible Bond AAA	305	8.2
Molett	598	0
More Plastic Ind.	339	0
Moshkovitz	157	0.6
MTI Computers	491	-0.4
Mul-T-Lock	899	0
Mule Senter	223	0
Nachshon Fund	47	-0.2
Naphtha	39.1	-3.9
Naphtha Oil Exp.	85.1	0
Natour	575	0
NATSVA BOND A	95.6	0.4
Navigator	322	0
Navigator Property	498	0
Nechushtan Bond B	73	-0.7
Nechushtan Prop.	185	0
Nechushtan Properties Bond A	122	0.4
Nechushtan Warrant 1	20	-30
Negev Ceramics	183.5	-1.1
Nehushtan 1	827	0
Nehushtan 5	3880	0
Neot Aviv	7684	0
Nessus	485	0
Neve Arbel	73	0
Neviim Hotels	410	0
Neviot	809	0
Nilit	337	0
Nikuv	1480	1.4
Nisco	2231	5.2
Nissan	233	0
NMC	348	-0.6
Noga	1489	-3
Noga Insorens	93	0
Nordan	12.4	0
Nordan Tech.	490	-3
Norfolk	667	-0.4
Norfolk Bond A	149	0
Nur	63	0
NYP	811	23.6
Oceana	326	0
Ocif Bond A	175	0
Ocif Bond B	174.5	0
Ocif Bond C	85.2	0.1
Ocif Warrant 2	936	0
Octava	735	0
Olak	183	0
Olar	6309	-0.5
Olla	884	0
Ogden	61	0
Ohaliav	680	-1.4
Oil Fields	1.2	-7.7
Oil-Dolt	209	-0.5
Omri	282	0
Omnitech	242	0.8
Ophir	430	-2.3
Oppenheimer	88	0
Optima	103.5	0
Orasys	4060	-0.5
Orazit	245	0
Orazit Bond A	157	0.3
Orda	3831	3
Orda Bond 1	176	0

	LAST	CHANGE*
Orev	482	1.9
Ortal	153	0
Odlis	458	0
Odlis Bond A	90	0
Odlis Warrant 2	87.5	0
Ormat Industries Bond D	128.9	0
Ormat Industries Warrant 5	149	0
Ortal	260	0
Otzar Hashilton	20100	1
Oz	227	-0.4
Oz side	410	-2.9
Packer Steel	6290	4.8
Patrough	499	0
Pama	848	5.5
Pamas	2405	0
Pan Dar	299	0
Pardes	880	0
Pardes Bond A	95	0
Passport	2857	-0.5
Paz Chen	378	0
PCB	1560	0.9
Polar Investment	58	0
Pereg	115.5	0
Pancasse	1151	-0.5
Phoenix Ins. 5	19950	2.3
Pica Plast	448	0
Pinros	128.5	0
Pinros Bond A	138.5	0
Pilot	356	0
Plason bond a	84.5	0
Plason warrant 1	390	0
Plasson	3580	0
Plasto Sac	710	5.5
Plasto Shack Bond A	84	0
Plasto Shack Warrant 2	126	0
Plasto Shack Warrant 3	7.1	0
Poalim Inv. Bond B	89.5	0
Poalim Inv. Warrant 3	2300	0
Poalim Investments Bond A	129	0
Point of Sale	6380	-0.5
Polak	292	0.3
Polgat A	248	0
Polgat B 4	869	-3.3
Polgat Bond B	188	0
Polygon	330	-0.8
Polygon Bond 2	210	0
Poraz	268	2.2
Poraz Warrant 1	79	3.3
Port	216	-0.9
Poseidon	97	-5.1
Pri Haemek	18.3	0
Pri Haemek Bond A	33.9	-2.9
Pritzker	262	0
Pritzker Bond A	141.5	0.4
Profit	299	-2
Profit Bond A	121	0
Python	344	0
Quality Cap Mills	575	-0.7
Rabintex	162.5	0
Ram Zur	80.5	-4.7
Ramgor 1	278	0
Ramgor 4	934	-8
Rapak	2980	2
Rapak Bond A	151.5	0
Rassco	844	0
Ratio	1.2	0
Ratz	0	0
Ratz Bond A	146	0
Rav Car	104	-1.9
Raviad	203	-8.5
RDC	1180	2.3
RDC Bond A	136	0
Red Sea Hotels	647	0
Regency	80	-0.6
Regency Bond 1	118	0
Regent	822	1.9
Regent Bond A	139	0.4
Reilach	380	0
Reshef	38.8	0
Reshef Bond B	59.5	0
Rimoni	790	3.3
Rogosin	1424	-0.4
Rogozin Bond A	78.5	0
Rogozin Warrant B	870	0
Rosetech	411	2.5
Rosebud	137	2.6
Rosental	131.5	-1.9
Rotem	372	0
Rotshtein	162.5	0
Rotshtein Bond A	138	0.4
RSL	669	4.5
Sapot Mop Bond A	97.5	0.5
Sahar Bond A	90.5	0
Sahar Dev.	2022	0
Sahar Securities	847	-0.5
Sahar Warrant 1	151.5	0.3
Sanlacol	188	0
Sano 1	1860	0
Sano 5	8690	0
Scope	1419	-0.1
Scope Bond A	89	0
Scope Warrant 2	240	-3.3
Sea Trade	585	-0.7
Secom	260	0
Securities	732	0
Securities Bond A	159	-0.3
Selen	1183	0
Seralon	405	-4
Shaked	309	0
Shamir	280	0
Shel	369	-0.5
Shelet	120	0
Shelet Bond A	142	0
Shalam	80	2.1
Shaham Barkan Bond 1	149.1	0
Shakam Bond 1	136.3	0
Shaham Warrant 1	2.3	0
Shelag	82	5.1
Shem Tov	316	0
Shemen	14340	-1.1
Shemen Bond A	157	0
Shladot	79	1.9
Shlomo Angel	5391	0
Shml c2	84	0
Shml w2	230	-3
Shokal	841	-1.4
Shmira Bond A	146	-5.8
Shnar	611	0
Shtang	137	0
Shulamit	220	-1.3
Shulamit Bond A	139	-0.4
Sidel	369	0
Sinai Bond A	134.6	0
Solel Bone Bond A	108.7	-0.3
Solel Bone R1	475	0
Soltag	447	0
Solomon	446	0
solomon bond a	72.5	0
Solomon Holdings	510	-0.2
solomon warrant 2	67.5	0
South Pipe	437	-2
Spanorit	384	0
Spectronix 1	1200	2.5
STG	1011	0
STG Bond A	107.5	-0.6
Suntrost	3080	0
Suny Electronics	505	1.4
Synopsis	145	2.5
Synopsis Bond A	142	0
Syntac	322	-1
Ta'al	287	-1.2
Tachol Bond B	73	0
Tachol Warrant 3	45	0
Tadbik	288	0
Tadiran Appl	387	0
Taksam	1529	8.4
Tal	79	9.7
Tal Bond A	73	-1.4
TAP Bond 1	271	1.1
Tashloz bond a	78.5	0
Tashloz warrant 2	87	0
Tashluz	570	2
Tashluz Bond A	183	4.2
Tashluz Bond B	122	0.8
Tashluz Prop.	538	0.9
Tashluz Warrant 2	14.9	0
Taste of Israel	249	9.7
TAT 1	470	0
TAT 5	1380	4.8
TAT Bond A	235	0
Taya	912	-0.5
Taya Comm. 1	317	-0.9
Team Computers	5570	1
Technoplast	480	1.3
Technoplast Warrant 2	485	-6.2
Tedea	2100	2.8
Tedea Bond A	102	0.5
Tedea Warrant 1	350	4.3
Tefahot Preferred	182400	0
Teflan	2760	-1
Teldor	577	0
Telsis	1382	-2
Telsis Warrant 1	282	0
Tene	309	-0.6
Teuza	230	0
Teuza Insured	238	0
Tilam Vest	183.5	-1.9
Tim Warrant 3	873	0
Tiv	419	0
TMM	76	-1.3
Tobias	1732	0.5
Tom	1124	0
Topline	377	0.5
Topline Bond 2	154.5	0.7
Topper	34.2	0
Topper Bond 1	63.5	0
Topper Warrant 2	1	0
Total Compounds	350	0
Trade	356	3.2
Trade Bond A	188.5	0
Trend Line	1168	0
Trocadero	62.5	-8.3
Trydan	494	-0.8
Tzabar	134	0
Tsarfati	486	0
Tsarfati Bond A	143	0.4
Tsur	185	-0.5
Tsur Bond A	242	0
Tsur Bond B	112	-0.4
Tsur Bond C	96	0
Tsur Preferred	160.5	0
Tuttnauer	1174	0.5
Tzmicha	828	-0.5
Tzmicha Bond A	160.5	-0.8
Ulkalo	73.5	-0.7
Unibar 1	919	0
Unibar 5	1190	0
Unico	3245	0
Unicorn 1	65	0
Unicorn Bond 1	220	3.8
Unidress	1005	0
United Steel	175	0
United Steel Industries Bond 1	160.9	0
Univercol	380	-0.5
Urdan Warrant 5	178	-3.4
Urope Israel	3161	2
Vardinon	26000	3.8
Vardinon Bond A	156.5	-0.3
Vardinon Convertible Bond AAA	139	0
Videomatrix	44.6	0
Vilar	400	0
Vilar Bond 1	147	0
Vill Food	1310	0
Villar Bond A	137.5	1.9
Vitalgo	348	0
Vitalgo Bond A	117	0
Vulcan	369	0
Vulcan Bond 1	221	0
Will Bond A	89.5	5.9
Will Warrant 1	245	2.4
Woolfman 1	[illegible]	0
Woolfman 5	2622	0
Woolson	65183	-1
Ya'ana	677	0
Yaacobi	180	0
Yaad Bond A	183.5	0
Yaad Bond B	86.5	0
Yaad Industries	332	0
Yaad Warrant 3	59.5	0
Yad	[illegible]	0
Yamit	228	-0.4

*In local currencies

	LAST	CHANGE*
Yarden	488	-0.2
Yarden Bond 2	120.5	0
YDPZ	233	0
YDPZ Bond A	144.5	0
Yeda	1450	-2
Yehuda	275	0
Yesh Gad	38.7	0
YLR	935	1
Yona Bond A	147.5	0
Yona Hotels	185	-0.5
Yoram	437	0
Yuval	132.5	0
Zakai	585	0
Zanes Holdings	54.5	0
Zarfati Bond B	87	0.5
Zarfati Warrant 2	53.5	0
Zat	95.5	0
Zehava	233	0
Zeller Ablagon	512	0.2
Zeller Ablagon Bond A	188	0.3
Zeller Ablagon Bond B	125	0
Zeller Inv. Bond A	65	-0.8
Zeller Inv. Warrant 1	9.2	-4.2
Zika 1	634	-1.6
Zika 5	2712	0
Zikit 1	5336	-2
Zikit 5	24113	0
Zinometal	728	-0.5
Zion Cables 1	270	1.8
Zion Holdings	14270	-1.7
Zion Textiles	105.5	8.2
Ziv	337	0
Zoher	275	-0.4
Zoko	253	2.4

ISRAELI SHARES ABROAD

AMEX

	LAST	CHANGE*
Am Israel Paper Mills	35.4375	+0.1875
Ampal American Israel	5.5875	+0.0625
Electro Chemical Ind	0.9375	+0
Etz Lavud	8.875	-0.125
Etz Lavud Cl A	7.125	-0.125
Integrated Technology	1.1875	0
Carmel Containers Sys	6.8125	-0.125

NASDAQ

	LAST	CHANGE*
ACS Electronics Ltd	4.5	+0.5625
Accent Software	0.46875	-0.03125
A.G. Associates	3.875	-0.0625
Aladdin	12.875	+0.4375
Ampal	16.0625	0
Arel	2.5625	+0
Anely Advertising Ltd	2.25	-0.0625
Better Online Solutions	4.4375	+0
Bio Technology General	8.3125	+0.0625
B.V.R. Technologies	13	+0
Checkpoint Software	41.3125	+1.8125
Cimatron	3.4375	-0.09375
Converse Technology	47	+0.75
Crystal Systems Solutions	16.4375	+0.3125
D.S.P.G. Group	19.25	+0.4375
D.S.P.T. Tech	9.75	+0.25
Data Systems Software	5.3125	+0
ECI Telecom	31	+0.75
Educal	6.6	-0.0625
Electric Fuel	2.5625	+0
Electronics for Imaging	23.9375	+0.1875
Elbit Computers	3.4375	+0.1875
Elron Electronics	18.25	+0.5625
Elbit Medical Imaging	8.5625	+0.4375
Elbit Systems Ltd	13.375	+0.125
Eltek Circuit Boards	1.5625	+0.03125
Engel General Developers	5.625	+0
ESC Medical Systems Ltd	33.5	-2.875
Elbit Vision Systems	3.875	+0.375
Eshed Robotec (1982)	0.5625	0
Formula Systems (1985)	39.625	+0.6875
Forsoft Ltd	13	+0.5
Fundtech	19.25	+0.5
Galileo	25.5	-0.4375
G.Willi-Food	6.25	+0.4375
Gilat Comm Ltd	10.25	+0.1875
Gilat Satellite Networks	57.5	+0.125
Genesis Bris	6.625	-0.5
Geotek	0.90625	-0.15625
Healthcare Technologies	1.34375	-0.03125
Home Center	15.875	+1.875
I.C.T.S.	8	+0.375
IIC Industries	11.5	0
I.I.S. Intelligent info	0.76	-0.125
Israel Land Develop - ADR	18	0
Indigo	6.125	+0.0625
ISG Intl Software Group	11.25	-0.5
Isramco	0.53125	-0.03125
Lan Optics	3.3125	-0.0625
Logal	0.90625	+0.09375
Level 8 Systems	12	+1.125
M-Systems Flash Disk	8.625	-0.125
Madge	5.375	-0.1875
Magal Security Systems	3.25	-0.71875
Matav	22.25	+0.25
Meda B	8.375	-0.3125
Memco	31.25	+1.125
Mer Telemanagement	3.125	+0.125
Mercury	37.5	+1.8125
Magic Software Enterprises	4.8125	+0
Netmanage	3.6875	-0.03125
New Dimension Software	22.625	-0.125
Nice Systems	48.625	+0
Neuro-Medical Systems	2.125	-0.1875
Noga Electro Mechanical	3.125	+0
Nur Technology	3.25	+0.25
Opti Systems Solutions	5.375	-0.125
Orbotech	31.75	-0.25
Orckit	20	+1.125
Oshap Technologies	8.375	+0.875
Pharmos	3.09375	+0.03125
Rada Electronics Ind	2.4375	+0.1875
Radcom Ltd	5.1875	+0.125
RIT Technologies	13.75	-0.375
RSL Communications	22.75	-0.25
Scitex Corporations	12.8125	+0.5625
Silicom	2.75	0
Summit Design	15.125	+0.25
Sapiens International	8.0625	-0.0625
Scanvec	2.375	0
Tadiran Telecomm	17	+0.875
Taro Pharmaceuticals Ind	5.375	+0.125
Tat Technologies	0.78125	0
Technomatix Technologies	24.5	+1.4375
Teva	42.9375	+0.625
Top Image Systems	2.5625	-0.0625
Teledata Communications	15.125	+0
Tower Semiconductor	9.375	+0.375
TTI Team Telecom Intl Ltd	6.4375	-0.0625
TVG Technologies	1	-0.03125
Vocaltec	19.875	+0.375
Witec Solutions	11.25	+0.375
Zag Industries Ltd	11.25	+0
Zoran Corporation	13.25	+0.1875

NYSE

	LAST	CHANGE*
Blue Square	13	+0
D.S.P. Communications	18.875	+1.5625
Elscint	7	-0.125
First Israel Fund	13.75	-0.0625
PEC Israel Economic Corp	23.1875	-0.3125
Koor	25.375	+0.5
Smula Inc	18.125	+0.9375
Super-Sol Ltd	16.3125	+0.25
Tadiran	43.6875	+0.875
Tefron Ltd	24.625	+0.125

SOURCE: S&P COMSTOCK (DATE 9-APR-98)

LONDON

	LAST	CHANGE*
Batm Advanced	150	+0
Ornsan Ltd	17	+0
Geo Interactive Media	143.5	+0
Pilat	57.5	+0
S.E.A. Multimedia	4.5	+0

SOURCE: S&P COMSTOCK (DATE 9-APR-98)

INTERNATIONAL SHARES

NEW YORK

	LAST	CHANGE*
Alza	44.9375	-0.3125
AMP Inc	43.5	-0.125
AMR Corp	137.938	-0.875
ASA	24.25	-0.5625
Abbott Labs	75.375	+0.6875
Advanced Micro	26.625	-0.6875
Aetna Life	87	+0.375
Affiliated Publ	33.25	+0
Aflac	63.5625	-0.3125
Ahmanson (HF)	78.125	-0.6875
Air Prods	82.875	-0.4375
Alberto-Culv B	30.1875	-0.125
Albertson's	50.5375	-0.4375
Alcan Aluminum	31.25	+0.625
Allied Signal	45.3125	-0.125
Alcoa	70.0625	+1.4375
Amax	46.375	+0.375
Amerada Hess	56.5	-0.25
Amer Brands	23.5	-0.0625
Amer El Power	48.1875	-0.1875
Amer Express	107.063	-3.25
Amer Gent Corp	56.5	-1.8125
Amer Greeting	45.1875	+1.1875
Amer Home Pr	94.1875	-0.0625
Amer Intl	127.5	+2.625
Amer Natl Ins	102	+1
Amer Power Conv	29.5	-3.3125
Amer Stores	24.375	-0.1875
Amer T & T	65.9375	-0.25
Amer West Hldg	27.75	+0.0625
Ameritech	46.8125	-0.25
Ametek Inc	25.75	+0.875
Amgen	57.5625	+0.125
Amoco	85.1875	+0.5
Analog Devices	34	+0.25
Andrew Corp	19.4375	+0.25
Anheuser-Busch	48.125	+0.5625
Aon Corp	68.8125	+0.1875
Apple Computer	25.625	+0.625
Applied Magnetics	11.125	+0
Applied Materials	34.75	-0.5
Archer Daniels	21.5625	+0.0625
Armco	6.625	+0.5625
Armstrong World	84.9375	+0.5625
Asarco	26.375	-0.0625
Ascend	39.5	-0.9375
Ashland Coal	27.1875	+0
Ashland Oil	53.0625	+0.25
Atlantic Energy	21.0625	-0.0625
Atlantic Richfld	75.5625	+0.0625
Auto Data Pro	65.875	+1.0625
Autodesk	42.125	+0.875
Avery Dennison	53.9375	+0.3125
Avnet Inc	58	+0.375
Avon Products	81.4375	+0.4375
Balmco Corp	11	-0.0625
Baker Hughes	39.3125	-0.5
Ball Corp	35.5625	+1.375
Baltimore Gas	32.375	+0.125
Banc One Corp	61.75	+0.125
Bandag	58.5	+1.4375
BankAmerica	86.5	+2
Bank of Boston	112.5	+1.9375
Bank of New Yk	64	+1.1875
Bankers Trst NY	128.5	+4.0625
Barnes & Noble	38.75	+1.0625
Battle Mount Gd	6.5625	-0.3125
Bausch & Lomb	49.25	+0.875
Baxter Intl	55.875	-0.1875
Bay Network	24.375	+0.0625
Becton Dickinson	70.5625	+0.5625
Bed Bath & Bynd	51.75	+0.125
Bell Atlantic	96.9375	+0.875
Bell Industries	13.125	-0.1875
BellSouth	68.5625	+1.25
HA Inco Corp	51.625	-1.125
Beneficial Corp	139.875	-3.125
Bethlehem Steel	14.75	-0.125
Beverly Entprs	14.5	+0.3125
Biomet	30	+1
Black & Decker	52.25	-0.75
Boeing	55.125	-0.125
Boise Cascade	35.6875	-0.0625
Bowater Inc	55.375	-0.25
Briggs & Strtn	44.4375	+0.0625
Bristl Myrs Sqb	103.875	-0.25
Brit Airws ADR	104.25	-2.625
Brit Steel ADR	24.5	+0.0625
Brit Telecom	109.688	+1.4375
Brown Group	15.1875	+0.5625
Brown & Sharpe	12	+0
Browning Ferris	33.625	+0.0625
Brunswick	33.5625	+0.5625
Burlington Nthn	88.5	+1.25
Burlington Res	49.125	+0.5
CBS Inc	36.6875	-0.125
CKS Group	21	+0.375
CMS Energy Corp	46.5	+0
CSX Corporation	57.1875	+0.875
Cabot Corp	36.9375	+0.125
Campbell Soup	52.8125	+0.4375
Canadian Pac	29.875	+0.5
Capital Cts ABC	111.25	+0.75
Caremark	19.6875	+0.125
Caremark Corp	28.625	+0
Carnival Corp	69.75	-1.75
Carolina Pwr Lt	44.1875	+0.25
Carpenter Tech	55.125	+0.125
Caterpillar	54.8125	+0.5625
Centex Corp	37.9375	+1.3125
Central & SW	26.9375	+0.1875
Ceridian	53.9375	+2.6875
Champion Intl	50.5625	+1.125
Chrmg Shoppes	4.5	-0.0625
Chase Manhattan	141.625	+1.375
Chevron Corp	80.3125	+1.25
Chiquita Brands	13.625	+0.125
Chrysler	43.5	+0.4375
Chubb Corp	80.5	+0
Cisco	67	-1.3125
Citicorp	165.875	+1
Clevid Cliffs	55.1875	+0.1875
Clorox	87.5625	-0.1875
Coastal Corp	68.3125	+1.1875
Coca Cola	78.5625	+0.5
Coca Cola Ent	38	-0.0625
Colgate Palmolv	85.75	+1.125
Comcast Corp A	35.0625	-0.28125
Compaq	24.5625	+0.25
Computer Ass Int	56.375	+0.8125
Computer Sci	52.75	+0.6875
Conagra	30.6875	+0.5625
Cons Edison	45.25	-0.0625
Cons Freightways	16.6875	-0.0625
Cons Nat Gas	58.25	+0.1875
Cooper Inds	66.6875	-0.25
Coors (Adolph)	34.5	+1.3125
Corning Inc	39.6875	-0.0625
Crane	51.5625	+0.25
Crompton Knowles	29.125	+0.625
Crown Cork Seal	52.625	+1.1875
Cummins Engine	50.875	-3.3125
Curtiss-Wright	38.4375	-0.0625
Cypress Semicon	9.4375	-0.0625
Cypress Mineral	16.875	+0.0625
Cytec Indust.	54.75	+1.25
DQE	36.6875	+0.0625
Dallas Semi	34.75	+0.875
Dana Corp	59.5625	+1.0625
Data General	17.125	+0.0625
Dayton Hudson	85.4375	+0.5625
De Beers	21.9375	-0.3125
Deere	59.75	+0.25
Dell Computers	87.6875	+0.75
Delta Air Lnes	115.438	+1.5625
Deluxe Corp	31.5	+0.125
Detroit Edison	40	+0.0625
Dial Corp Del	24.25	+0.875
Diebold Inc	40.3125	-0.25
Digital Equip	51.875	+0.25
Dillard Dep St	38.6875	+0.3125
Disney (Walt)	109.063	+2.0625
Dominion Res	40.375	-0.4375
Donnelley (RR)	43.5625	+0.0625
Dover Corp	38	-0.75
Dow Chemicals	96.625	+1.125
Dow Jones	53	-0.125
Dresser	47.5875	-0.6875
DSC Comm	18.0625	+0.0625
Duke Power	59.6875	+0.9375
Dun & Bradst	34.625	+0.125
Du Pont	73.875	+2.8125
E G & G Corp	29.125	+1.3125
Eastern Ents	43.4375	+0.3125
Eastman Kodak	64.0625	-0.0625
Eaton Corp	92.875	+0.875
Echlin Inc	50.0625	+0
Emerson Elec	66.25	+0.25
Engelhard Corp	19.625	+0
Enron Corp	47.4375	+1.5
Ensergy Corp	28.9375	-0.1875
Enzo Biochem	15	+0.125
Equifax Inc	39.0625	+1.3125
Ericsson	52.8125	+1.125
Ethyl Corp	7.8125	-0.0625
Exide Corp	18.625	+0.125
Exxon	66.75	+0.625
FMC Corp	79.3125	+0.3125
FPL Group	62.75	+0.3125
Fedders Corp	5.5625	-0.125
Federal Express	72.6875	+1.9375
Federal Mogul	58	+0.875
Fed Natl Mtge	63.8125	+0.5
First Chicago	94	+1.5625
First Union	56.9375	+1.6875
Fruit of the Loom	33.375	+0.6875
Fst Union Rlty	11.4375	-0.375
Fleet Finl Grp	84.9375	+0.6875
Fleetwd Enterp	43.5	+0.625
Fleming Cos Ok	19	+0.375
Florida Prog	40.625	-0.0625
Fluor Corp	47	-0.125
Food Lion Inc	10.5313	-0.21875
Ford Motor	46.75	+2.25
Fortune Brands	40.8125	-0.3125
Foster Wheeler	30.3125	+0.1875
Galoob Toys	11.375	+0.4375
Gateway 2000	[illegible]	+0.03125
GATX Corp	81.25	+1.9375
GTE Corp	60.125	+1.0625
Gannett	74.5625	+0.4375
Gap Inc Del	46.3125	+1.5625
Gencorp	30.3125	+1.3125
Gen Am Invest	29.25	+0.1875
Gen Dynamics	44	-0.8125
Gen Electric	86.5625	+0.4375
Gen Mills	74.5	-0.0625
Gen Motors	67.4375	+0.875
Gen Motors H	49	-0.5625
Gen Public Util	43.4375	-0.0625
Gen Reinsurnce	225.625	+1.625
Gen Signal	45.0625	-0.8125
Gen DataComm	5.25	-0.125
Genuine Parts	37.1875	-0.0625
Georgia Pac	65.3125	-0.8125
Germany Fund	17.75	+0.4375
Gillette	120.688	+0.9375
Glaxo ADR	58.3125	+0.25
Golden W Finl	98.125	-1.0625
Goodrich (BF)	50.1875	-0.25
Goodyear Tire	71.5	+1
Grace (W&R)	20.0625	+0.25
Grainger (WW)	102.75	-0.4375
Grt Atl Pac Tea	30	+0
Grt Central Mine	4.25	0
Gulf Canada Res	5.6875	+0.0625
Halliburton	49.875	-0.5625
Hanna (MA)	23.875	+0
Harcourt	54.6875	+0.4375
Harley Davidson	31	+0.0625
Harnischfeger	32.5	+0.5
Harrah's Ent	24.6875	+0.375
Harris Corp	50.3125	+0.0625
Harsco Corp	46.25	+0.25
Hartmarx	8.1875	+0.1875
Hasbro	36.875	+0.5
Health Care Ppt	36.0625	-0.3125
Hecla Mining	6.5625	-0.125
Heinz (HJ)	59	+0.4375
Helix Technol	19.375	+0.125
Hmrch & Payne	31.0625	-0.1875
Hercules	49.1875	-0.375
Hershey Foods	76.0625	+1.875
Hewlett Packard	61.125	-0.875
Hilton Hotels	31.75	+0.25
Hirsch Int	8.4375	-0.125
Hollinger	15.8125	-0.125
Home Depot	70.8125	+2.625
Homestake	11.625	-0.375
Honeywell	86.3125	+2.8125
Hormel (Geo)	34.6875	-0.75
Household Intl	142.75	+3.0625
Houston Inds	29.625	+0.1875
Humana	26.9375	+0.4375
IBM	108.5	+2
Illinova Corp	29.9375	-0.0625
Illinois Tool	63.0625	+0.5625
INCO	18.375	+0.125
Ingersoll Rand	51.3125	-0.1875
Inland Steel	26.8125	+0
Intel Corp	73.75	+1.1875
Intergraph	7.75	+0.25
Interlake	4.5625	+0
Intl Flav & Fr	45.625	-0.375
Intl Multifoods	30.625	+1
Intl Paper	48.1875	+0.1875
Interpublic	61.3125	-0.5
Jefferson Plt	90.3125	+0.5625
Johnson & J	74.4375	+0.75
K Mart	17.5	-0.4375
Kaiser Alum	9.875	-0.1875
Kellogg	41.9375	-0.0625
KLA Instruments	37.125	+0.0625
Kennametal	52.25	+0.3125
Kerr-McGee	66.8125	+0
KeyCorp	39.125	+0.75
Kimberly-Clark	48.4375	-0.25
King World Prod	28	-0.75
Knight Ridder	55.9375	+1
Kroger	46.625	-0.4375
LSI Logic	25.375	-0.3125
Leggett & Platt	55.25	+0.0625
Leucadia Natl	38.375	+0.3125
Lilly (Eli)	63.9375	-1.0625
Limited Inc	30.9375	+1.0625
Linear Technol	65.25	+0
Lincoln Nat	89.875	+0.8125
Litton	60.1875	+0.6875
Liz Claiborne	49.1875	+0.0625
Lockheed Corp	109	+0
Loews Corp	102	+0.5
Lone Star	70.125	+0.4375
Long Island Lt	31.4375	-0.125
Longs Drug Strs	29.6875	+0
Loral Corp	32.5625	+0.8125
Louisiana Pacif	21.875	+0.25
Lowe's Co Inc	67.6875	+2.1875
Lucent Tech	70	+2
Lubrizol	35.9375	-0.125
Madge	5.375	+0.1875
MCI Commun	50.0625	+0.8125
Mallinckrodt	38.9375	+0.375
Manor Care	37.0625	+0.0625
Mapco Inc	-	-
Marriott	36.125	-0.0625
Mrsh & McLn	89.3125	+0.8125
Marvel	0.5	+0.0625
Masco Corp	59.8125	-0.25
Massmutual Corp	26.3125	-0.0625
Mattel Inc	37.875	-0.5625
May Dept St	64.1875	+1.8125
Maytag Corp	52.9375	+0.9375
McDermott	38.75	+0.3125
McDonalds	62.1875	+1.1875
McGraw Hill	75.25	+0.5
McKesson Corp	61.25	-0.4375
Mead Corp	33.8125	-0.3125
Medtronic	53.9375	+0.4375
Mellon Bk	69.0625	+2.125
Mentor Graphics	10.25	+0.1875
Mercantile Strs	67.3125	+0.5
Merck Inc	126.25	-1.5625
Meredith Corp	41.375	+0.25
Merrill Lynch	84.9375	+2.9375
Micron Technol	27.75	-0.25
Microsoft Corp	89	+0.0625
Millipore	35.4375	+0.8125
Mine Safety App	72	+0.0625
Minnesota Mine	94.0625	+1.4375
Mitchell Energy	25.875	-0.5625
Mobil Corp	76.875	+1.375
Mobile Telecom	22.625	-0.125
Molex Inc	26.1875	-0.0625
Monarch Macht	8	+0
Monsanto	56.6875	-0.0625
Morgan (JP)	140.563	+3.1875
Morton Intl	32.0625	+0
Motorola Inc	53.875	-1.0625
Murphy Oil	48.8125	+0.375
Nacco Inds	127.688	-0.625
Nalco Chemical	40.375	+0
Nashua Corp	14.8125	+0.125
NationsBank	76.4375	+2.1875
Natl City Corp	74.4375	+1.375
Natl Semi	21.875	-0.125
Natl Serv Ind	57.25	-2.25
NatWest Bank	116.875	+0.875
Navistar Intl	33.125	+0.5625
Netscape	17.125	+0.3125
New England El	44.4375	+0.25
News Corp	28.125	-0.0625
NY State El Gas	39.375	+0.3125
NY Times	70.6875	+0.5
Newmont Mining	32.5	-0.625
Niag Mohawk	12.625	-0.0625
Nicor Inc	41.6875	-0.25
Nike Inc	44.25	+0.4375
NL Industries	17.1875	-0.4375
Noble Affil	41.9375	+0
Nokia	115.375	-0.5
Nordstrom	61.5625	-0.6875
Norfolk Southrn	35.625	-0.4375
Northeast Util	15.125	-0.125
Novell	9.875	+0.25
Nthn State Pwr	58.4375	+0.1875
Northrop	106.313	-0.0625
Norwest Corp	42	+0.875
NSI	2.125	-0.1875
Occidental Pet	30	+0.125
Ogden Corp	28.6875	+0.125
OEA	15.625	-0.3125
Ohio Casualty	40.875	+0.6875
Olin Corp	46.9375	+0.875
Omnicom Group	45.875	-0.125
Oneok Inc	40.1875	-0.0625
Oracle Systems	26.9375	-0.125
Oryx Energy Co	25.125	+0.125
Oshkosh B'gosh	36	+0.3125
Overseas Ship	21.1875	-0.1875
Owens Corning	39.875	+0.625
PNC Financial	61.125	+1.1875
PPG Industries	69.25	+0.9375
Paccar Inc	61.5313	-0.84375
Pacificorp	23.9375	+0.1875
Pac Enterprises	40.0625	+0.1875
Pac Gas & Elect	32.5625	+0.1875
Pall Corp	20.375	-0.0625
Parker Drilling	10.0625	-0.125
Parker Hannifin	49.8125	+0.125
Payless Shoe	70	-1.375
Penney (JC)	74.125	-0.125
Pennsyl Pwr Lt	24	+0.4375
Pennzoil	66.4375	-0.4375
Peoples Energy	35.9375	-0.0625
Pepsico	42	-0.0625
Perkin Elmer	71.5	-0.0625
Pfizer	99.25	+0.5
Pharmacia & Upj	44.4375	-0.3125
Phelps Dodge	67.5	+1.75
Philadel Elec	21.75	-0.125
Philip Morris	40.375	+0.5625
Philips Elec	74.5625	+0.5625
Phillips Pet	49.875	+0.25
Phycor Inc	21.5625	-0.125
Pioneer Hi Bred	102	+0.375
Pitney Bowes	50.25	+0.5
Policy Mgt Sys	75.625	+1.625
Polycom	12.625	+1.625
Potash Corp	88.9375	+0.4375
Potomac El Pwr	25	-0.1875
Procter & Gamble	86.25	-0.0625
Promus Hotel Cor	47.75	+1.25
Pub Svc Enterpr	36.8125	+0.3125
Pug Snd Pwr	28.125	+0.3125
Quaker Oats	57.75	+1.4375
Qualcom	63.9375	+1.25
Quanex Corp	31	+0.875
RJR Nabisco	29.8125	-0.1875
Ralston Purina	103.438	+0.6875
Rank Orgnsn ADR	13.25	+0.25
Raychem Corp	41.4375	+0.0625
Raytheon A	57.375	+1.5
Raytheon B	58.375	+1.4375
Reebok Intl	31.6875	+1.5625
Republic NY	137.938	+1.9375
Reynolds Reyn A	23	+0.1875
Reynolds Metals	61.6875	+0
Rite Aid Corp	34.1875	+1.375
Rockwell Intl	56	+0.3125
Rohm & Haas	107.438	+2.875
Rouse	31.9375	+0.0625
Rowan	28.6875	-0.125
Royal Dutch	57.875	+1
Rubbermaid	29.5625	+0.4375
Ruddick	18.1875	+0.125
Russell Corp	28	+0.625
Ryder System	37.9375	+0.125
SPS Technology	57.0625	-0.4375
Safeco Corp	54.5625	-0.15625
Safety-Kleen	28.875	+0
St Paul's Cos	87.75	+0.375
San Diego Gas	27.375	-0.0625
Sara Lee Corp	62.9375	+1
Schering Plough	82.5	+0
Schlumberger	74.375	-0.25
Scientif Atlanta	18.375	-0.0625
Scripps	55.875	+0.25
Seagate Tech	24.25	-0.6875
Seagram	38.125	-0.375
Sears Roebuck	55.9375	-0.4375
Sensormatic Elec	15.875	-0.0625
Sequent Computer	18	-0.25
Service Corp I	42.25	-0.125
Service Master	28.3125	-0.1875
Shell Trans	44.6875	+0.875
Sherwin Willms	35.5625	+0.3125
Shoney's Inc	5.6875	-0.0625
Sigma Aldrich	37.9063	+0.46875
Silicon Graphics	15.5625	+0.875
Skyline Corp	31.375	+0.0625
Smith Intl	54.375	-0.6875
SmKline Bchm A	66.6875	+0.3125
Snap-On-Tools	45.5	+0.1875
Sonat	42.375	-0.1875
Sonoco Prods	42.8125	+0
Sony Corp ADR	88.9375	-0.8125
Southdown	70.5625	+0.5
Southern Co	27.5	+0
Sth N. Eng Tel	70.4375	+0.5
Southw Airlines	29.125	+0
SBC Southwest Bell	41.5625	+0.125
Spring Inds	55.1875	+0.875
Sprint Corp	67.375	+0.5
Standard Prods	31.5	-0.125
Stanley Works	54.8125	+0.75
Stone Container	12.3125	-0.0625
Storage Technol	77.5625	-0.125
Stratus Comp	43.5625	-0.625
Sun America	0.9375	+0
Sun Company	40.0625	+2
Sundstrand	61.25	+0.6875
Sun Microsystms	39.4375	+0.3125
Sunshine Mining	1.3125	+0
Suntrust	75.125	+1.25
Supervalu	45.9375	+0.0625
Symantec	26.0625	+1.3125
Sysco Corp	24.875	-0.25
TJX Cos Inc	44.625	+0.3125
TRW Inc	54.75	-0.125
Tab Products	13.25	-0.0625
Tandy Corp	48.875	+1.0625
Telecom Corp	31.125	-0.1875
Telefonos de Mex	55.375	+1.1875
Telef De Espana	132	+1.5
Temple Inland	60.75	+0.375
Tenneco	43.25	+0.25
Tenet Health	39.125	+0.875
Teradyne	37.5625	-0.5625
Tesoro Pet	18.875	+0.5625
Texaco	60.8125	-0.3125
Texas Instrmnts	52.4375	-0.25
Texas Utilities	41.625	+0.4375

	LAST	CHANGE*
Textron	80.5	+0.625
Thiokol	48.0625	-0.375
Thomas & Betts	60.1875	+0.375
ThreeCom	32.375	-0.375
Time Warner	75	-0.0625
Times-Mirror	[illegible]	+0.25
Timken	34.1875	-0.1875
Torchmark	47.25	+0.125
Tosco Corp	32.9375	-0.5625
Toys R Us	29.0625	+0.125
Transamerica	119.438	-0.375
Transco Energy	69.125	-0.875
Travelers Grp	67.25	+0
Tribune	69.9375	+0.875
Triton Energy	37.75	+0.0625
TWA	10.0625	-0.1875
Tyco Labs	54	+0.6875
Tyler	10.5	+1
UAL Corp	92.1875	-0.375
USG Corp	56.8125	+0.125
UST Inc	29.875	-0.25
USX Marathon	37.125	-0.0625
USX-US Steel	39.3125	+0.0625
Ultramar Diam	34.625	-0.125
Unicom Corp	34.75	+0.25
Unilever PLC	42.125	-0.25
Unilever NV	74.875	+0
Union Camp	57.3125	-0.5
Union Carbide	50.625	+0.6875
Union Pacific	56.3125	+0.75
Unisys Corp	18.6875	+0.1875
USAIR Group	72	-0.5625
USF&G Corp	24.4375	+0.1875
US Home	44.6875	-0.6875
US Surgical	32.6875	+0.1875
US Trust	65.75	+0.125
US West	53.625	-0.3125
United Tech	95.3125	+0.0625
Unocal Corp	40.0625	-0.125
VF Corp	51.75	+0.625
Valero Energy	33.875	+0.0625
Varian Assoc	53	-0.5625
Viacom Inc	55	+0.125
Vishay	20.875	-0.0625
Vulcan Materials	110.313	+2.1875
Wachovia	84.5	+0.1875
Walgreen	34.9375	-0.3125
Wal-Mart Stores	50.8125	+0.8125
Warner-Lambert	178.125	-1.3125
Wash Gas Light	26.75	-0.0625
Washington Mutu	72	-0.90625
Washington Post	528.625	+7
Waste Mgmnt Inc	32.4375	+1
Watkins-Johnson	28.8125	-0.25
Weis Markets	35.4375	+0.1875
Wells Fargo	352.125	+10.3125
Wendy's Intl	22.5625	+0.125
Westvaco	30.25	-0.3125
Weyerhaeuser	56.5	-0.125
Whirlpool	69	+0.125
Whitman	20.125	+0.375
Williams Co	33.6875	+0.1875
Winn Dixie Stos	41.9375	-0.4375
Woolworth	25.0625	+0.125
World Comm	43	+0.5
Worthington Ind	18.25	-0.125
Wrigley	83.3125	+2.125
Xerox	113	+1
Yellow Freight	19.25	+0.5
Zenith Electron	3.4375	+0.25
Zero Co	31.875	+0.5

LONDON

Allied Domecq	532	+10
B/C Inds	560	+7
BT	580	-1.5
BTR	206.25	+10.25
Barclays	1825	-13
Bass	1175	+14
Boots	[illegible]	-12
British Airways	814.5	[illegible]
Cable & Wire		-
Comm Union plc	[illegible]	+33
Diageo	739.5	-6.5
General Electric	436.5	-11.75
Glaxo	1755	-4
Halifax	980	+1.5
HSBC (75p shs)	1982	+27
ICI	1124	+17
Land Securities	1070	+1
Lloyds Bank	1022.5	-1.5
Marks & Spencer	580	+7.5
NatWest Bank	1160	-5
Prudential	947.5	+23
Reuters	670	+10.5
Sainsbury	510	[illegible]
Shell Transport	446	+5
Unilever	530	-4.5
Zeneca	2720	-2

PARIS

Accor	1666	+56
Air Liquide	1128	+26
Alcatel Alsthom	1147	+43
Euro Disney	10.1	-0.05
Michelin B	359.9	-0.6
Moulinex	155.1	-0.5
Paribas	674	+4
Pernod Ricard	409.4	-2.6
Peugeot	1022	+18
Saint Gobain	1013	+8

FRANKFURT

	LAST	CHANGE*
Bayer	83	+0.5
Daimler-Benz	191.5	+5.8
Lufthansa	39	-0.8
Mannesmann	1523	-15
Metallgesellschaft	40	+0.6
Volkswagen	1512	+7

SOURCE: S&P COMSTOCK (DATE 9-APR-98)

FOREIGN EXCHANGE RATES

	Last	Change
Sal (Basket) (1)	3.9379	0
U.S. Dollar (1)	3.692	0
British Pound (1)	6.1703	0
Deutsch Mark (1)	2.0262	0
French Franc (1)	0.6045	0
Japanese Yen (100)	2.772	0
Swiss Franc (1)	2.4378	0
Canadian Dollar (1)	2.5903	0
Italian Lira (1000)	2.0517	0
Jordanian Dinar (1)	5.2426	0

NEW YORK MARKET INDEXES

	Last	Change
DJ Industrials	8994.86	+103.38
DJ Transport	3537.19	+30.62
DJ Utils	287.37	+1.75
DJ Comp	2891.25	+28.43
NYSE Industr	709.99	+4.67
NYSE Transport	519.85	-2.37
NYSE Comp	578.35	+4.67
S&P 100	533.2	+4.84
S&P Spot Index	1110.67	+9.02

OTHER MARKET INDEXES

	Last	Change
FTSE 100	6105.5	+50.3
Tokyo Nikkei	16536.6	+160
Singapore all-share index	408.5	+6.16
Hong Kong Hang Seng Index	11342	-27.6
Israel Index	238.36	-204.27
Paris CAC 40	3894.48	[illegible]
DAX	5289.48	-87.59
Madrid	916.25	+12.55
Swiss Market Index	7624.1	-35
Sydney	2805.8	-7.7
Milan	1665.07	-89.29

DOLLAR CROSSRATES (US)

	Last	Change
Pound: spot	[illegible]	-0.0058
Jun.future (CME)	[illegible]	-0.0058
D-mark: spot	1.8235	+0.0078
Jun.future (CME)	[illegible]	-0.003
S-franc: spot	1.5162	+0.0063
Jun.future (CME)	0.665	-0.003
Yen: spot	131.03	[illegible]
Jun.future (CME)	0.007744	-4.5e-005
CanDlr: spot	1.426	[illegible]
Jun.future (CME)	0.7023	-0.0011
AusDlr: spot	0.6532	-0.0085
Jun.future (CME)	0.6547	-0.0067
F-franc: spot	[illegible]	[illegible]
It Lira: spot	1800.5	+14
Nlg: spot	2.0529	+0.003
AutShlg: spot	12.8059	+0.0005
Rand: spot	5.049	+0.001
ECU: spot	1.0874	-0.0024

US COMMODITIES

	Last	Change
Cocoa (May) (CEC)	1607	-29
Coffee (May) (CEC)	146.3	+1.75
Wheat (May) (CBOT)	298.5	-3.75
Soybean (May) (CBOT)	633	+1.25
Sugar (May) (CEC)	9.53	+0.02
Orange juice (May)(CEC)	94.1	-0.75
Bonds Jun.future	121.156	-0.21875
S and P Jun.future	1119	-7.2

LONDON COMMODITIES

	Last	Change
Cocoa (May) (LCE)	1036	-17
Coffee (May) (LCE)	1906	-31
Brent crude oil (May)(IPE)	1400	-2

SPOT MARKET METALS (US)

	Last	Change
Silver: spot	6.15	-0.01

NEW YORK METAL FUTURES

	Last	Change
Gold (Apr)	308	-0.9
Silver (May)	6.4	+0.007
Platinum (Apr)	429	-4.7
Palladium (Jun)	270	+2.95
High-grade copper (May)	0.8105	-0.028

LONDON METAL FIXES

	Last	Change
Gold AM fix	308.35	-1.4
Gold PM fix	307.66	-1.15
Silver fix	641	-5

Month in parentheses signals contract exp. date (Spot market listings are from approximately 23.30 Israeli time. All others are closing quotes.)

SOURCE: S&P COMSTOCK (DATE 9-APR-98)

Tel Aviv shares data supplied by Pacific Mediterranean Investments, Tel. 09-958-5873. All other data supplied by Commstock Trading Ltd., Tel. 02-624-4963. Due to technical failures data may be inaccurate. The Jerusalem Post will not be held responsible for the consequences of any transaction made on the basis of these data. Readers who wish to report missing or misquoted data should do so on postcards only, addressed to Jerusalem Post Business Desk, P.O.B. 81, Jerusalem 91000

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CommStock Trading Ltd.
Futures, Options, Stocks, Bonds and Mutual Funds
34 Ben Yehuda St., Jerusalem
Tel. 02-624-4963 Fax. 02-625-9515
http://www.commstock.co.il
E-mail: commstock@pobox.com

Pacific Mediterranean Capital Markets Group
PAC MED Group
- Stock broking
- Equity research
- Money management
- Corporate finance

Tel. : 972-9-9585877
Telefax : 972-9-9585996
E-Mail : meirns@trendline.co.il
Contact : Elan Levi

ISRAEL MONEY MARKETS

Patah (foreign currency deposit rates) (22.2.98)

Currency (deposit for:)	3 MONTHS	6 MONTHS	12 MONTHS
U.S. dollar ($250,000)	4.710	4.710	4.910
Pound sterling (£100,000)	5.540	5.530	5.590
German mark (DM 200,000)	2.020	2.110	2.500
Swiss franc (SF 200,000)	0.000	0.000	0.000
Yen (10 million yen)	—	—	—

(Rates vary higher or lower than indicated according to deposit)

Shekel Foreign Exchange Rates* (9.4.98)

	Checks and Transfers Buy	Checks and Transfers Sell	Banknotes Buy	Banknotes Sell	Rep. Rates**
Currency basket	3.8957	3.9588	—	—	3.9379
U.S. dollar	3.6530	3.7120	3.59	3.77	3.6920
German mark	2.0035	2.0359	1.96	2.07	2.0262
Pound sterling	6.1015	6.2000	5.99	6.29	6.1703
French franc	0.5978	0.6075	0.58	0.62	0.6045
Japanese yen (100)	2.7447	2.7890	2.69	2.83	2.7724
Dutch florin	1.7788	1.8073	1.74	1.84	1.7990
Swiss franc	2.4098	2.4487	2.36	2.49	2.4378
Swedish krona	0.4619	0.4694	0.45	0.48	0.4674
Norwegian krone	0.4824	0.4902	0.47	0.50	0.4885
Danish krone	0.5255	0.5340	0.51	0.55	0.5314
Finnish mark	0.6599	0.6706	0.64	0.68	0.6673
Canadian dollar	2.5554	2.6068	2.52	2.65	2.5903
Australian dollar	2.3900	2.4286	2.34	2.47	2.4159
S. African rand	0.7236	0.7353	0.65	0.74	0.7315
Belgian franc (10)	0.9715	0.9872	0.95	1.01	0.9823
Austrian schilling (10)	2.8476	2.8936	2.79	2.94	2.8803
Italian lira (1000)	2.0293	2.0621	1.99	2.10	2.0517
Jordanian dinar	5.1415	5.2245	5.07	5.42	5.2426
Egyptian pound	1.0400	1.1300	1.04	1.13	1.1445
ECU	3.9736	4.0377	—	—	4.0182
Irish punt	5.0485	5.1300	4.96	5.21	5.1031
Spanish peseta (100)	2.3611	2.3992	2.32	2.44	2.3804

*These rates vary according to bank. **Bank of Israel.

SOURCE: BANK LEUMI

TASE rises on weaker shekel

Tel Aviv

Stocks rose on expectations that the recent shekel devaluation will endure, improving profits for exporters without spurring price rises.

Makhteshim Chemical Works, which sells insecticide and fungicide products abroad, advanced 3.2 percent to 168.7, helping the Maof Index of the 25 largest companies to gain 1.69% to 327.08.

The shekel weakened 3% in one week on concern about how it will react after the government removes restrictions on currency transactions in the coming weeks, making it freely convertible. That has prompted expectations of improved profits from exporters, analysts said.

"There is no doubt that the devaluation is good for companies in the electronics and chemicals industries," said Ephraim Steinbruch, an analyst at Ofek Securities and Investments. In the weeks ahead, the shekel should fluctuate in a band between NIS 3.67 and about NIS 3.70 against the dollar.

The shekel weakened yesterday to 3.692 against the dollar from 3.679 on Wednesday.

"For the economy, that's very good because it's not too much of a depreciation. It can help the export industries without affecting inflation too much," said Eli Nahum, head trader at Zannex Securities. "The best anyone can wish is that the dollar will stabilize at the current levels."

Gainers included Discount Investment, which jumped 4.6% to 101.6 after saying it agreed to sell its 37.6% stake in Delek Israel Fuel Corp. to investor Yitzhak Tshuva for NIS 580 m.

The investment company, "is getting a lot of cash and they will be able to direct the money toward investments that will bring a higher return than Delek," Steinbruch said.

Delek, an operator of a chain of gas stations and a Mazda car importing business, rose 1.5% to 140.7.

Europe

The UK's FTSE 100 closed higher, buoyed by the Bank of England's decision not to raise UK rates and a feisty rally on Wall Street, but trading volumes were paltry ahead of the Easter break. The FTSE 100 closed at 6105.5, up 50.3 points, or 0.83 percent, a rise of 41.3 since last Friday.

In Frankfurt, Germany's Xetra DAX index ended above the psychologically important 5,300-point level after a late rally in afternoon trade, with sentiment positive heading into the four-day Easter holiday. The DAX-30 index closed at 5317.22, up 47.76 points, or 0.91 percent. In later screen-based trade the Xetra DAX index ended at 5312.25, up 44.90 points, or 0.85 percent, up 57.93 from last Friday.

Shares in Paris reversed an early dip to post New York-led gains at the close, but activity was relatively light ahead of the long Easter weekend and after two sessions of consolidation.

The CAC-40 index closed at 3894.48, up 20.61 points, or 0.53 percent, but down 37.54 since last Friday.

STOCKS

Maof 327.08 ▲ 1.69%

Dow Jones 8994 ▲ 1.1%

FTSE 6105.5 ▲ 0.83%

Nikkei 16536.66 ▲ 0.98%

Swiss shares closed higher ahead of the four day weekend. Dealers said the market's rebound from early losses was due to position-squaring and stronger S&P-futures, which indicated a better start on Wall Street. The Swiss market index closed at 7624.1, up 36.0 points, or 0.47 percent, up 101.8 over the four days of trading this week.

The Milan bourse closed down for the third day in a row but off lows after a volatile session. Gains on Wall Street failed to turn the bourse higher and dealers remained nervous.

The All Share Mibtel index closed at 24438, down 324 points, or 1.31 percent, a fall of 1,132 since last Friday.

Dutch shares finished slightly firmer amid general strength across Europe and after early gains on Wall Street, but traders said volumes were limited ahead of the four-day weekend. The AEX index closed at 1168.87, up 3.85 points, or 0.33 percent a rise of 6.75 from last Friday.

Asia

Japanese stocks rose for a fourth day, led by retailers, on a report Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto may announce 4-trillion yen in tax cuts at a press conference after the end of trading yesterday.

Hashimoto and ruling party officials are hammering out details of a plan increasing income tax cuts previously agreed for 1998 by 2-trillion yen ($15.2 billion) and offering another 2-trillion yen the following year, the evening edition of the *Nihon Keizai* newspaper said.

"When the market heard 4-trillion yen, we saw a rush to buy back oversold shares," said Yoshio Inamura, an assistant general manager at Tokyo-Mitsubishi Asset Management Ltd.'s portfolio management department. "The cuts don't go as far as investors want, but they're a step in the right direction."

The benchmark Nikkei 225 index rose 160.04 points, or 0.98%, to 16,536.66. The broader Topix index of all shares on the first section of the Tokyo Stock Exchange jumped 12.40 points, or 1.0%, to 1254.74.

The report lifted shares in Japan's struggling supermarkets and department stores, which have seen sales fall for the last 11 months.

Buyers were also encouraged by a report the government plans to delay its deficit-cutting targets to accommodate the large-scale tax reductions advocated by many of Japan's trading partners and much of its own business community.

(Bloomberg)

Wall Street

Stocks surged yesterday after some high-profile companies opened the first-quarter reporting season with better-than-expected earnings.

Based on early, unofficial data, the Dow Jones industrial average ended up 103.38 points, or 1.1 percent, at 8,994.86 after edging above the 9,000 level for the second time this week.

In the broad market, advancing issues beat declines 9 to 5 on moderate volume of 550 million shares on the New York Stock Exchange.

The Nasdaq composite index rose 13.23 points to 1,820.24.

Financial markets will be closed today for Good Friday.

Wall Street also got good news that inflation fell in March for the fifth straight month, offering fresh evidence that inflation is virtually non-existent in the economy.

The government reported the Producer Price Index fell by a steeper-than-expected 0.3 percent last month, reassuring those concerned about inflation.

"The inflation numbers just give people confidence, and we have just started a new quarter and most of the pre-announcements are out," said Arnie Owen, managing director of capital markets at Cruttenden Roth, referring to profit warnings already issued by companies.

Chrysler Corp. and Yahoo! Inc. cheered investors with better-than-expected earnings. Chrysler rose 9/16 to 43-1/2 and Yahoo! rose 16 to 113-1/4. Another Internet stock, America Online, gained 1-11/16 to 73-1/2.

(Reuters)

Yen declines as Hashimoto's economic plan disappoints

The dollar rose against the yen, snapping two days of declines amid doubts tax cuts and public spending plans announced by Japan's prime minister, will be enough to keep the economy out of recession.

Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto said he would extend a two- trillion-yen ($15 billion) tax cut announced in December into next year and shave an additional 2-trillion yen off taxes this year.

He said the government will inject 10 trillion yen into the economy in tax cuts and public spending. Still, analysts said that wouldn't spur enough domestic demand to lift the economy from an seven-year slump.

"It isn't enough, so it's not going to make any great difference in the outlook for the Japanese economy," said Steven Mansell, senior strategist at BNP Capital Markets, who said he would sell the yen and sees it falling to weaker than 135 per dollar in the weeks ahead.

The dollar surged almost two yen to 133.21 yen, from 131.50 before Hashimoto's announcement. It also rose to 1.8240 marks from 1.815 late Wednesday in London.

The dollar extended its gains after a mild earthquake shook the Tohoku region north of Tokyo, fueling fears any damage could hamper efforts to boost growth, said Nick Parsons, a currency strategist at Paribas Capital Markets. No damage from the quake has been reported.

Hashimoto said the government will study changes to a fiscal reform law that limits public spending, and remain "flexible." Investors had hoped more concrete plans to relax the law would be announced.

"It's very disappointing," said Brian Martin, chief currency economist at Barclays Capital. "It shows that, politically, Japan doesn't have the capability to produce an economic package that will impact domestic demand. This will extend yen weakness going forward."

CURRENCIES

Dollar 3.692 ▲ 0.35%

Basket 3.9379 ▲ 0.5%

Mark 2.0282 ▲ 0.91%

Sterling 6.1703 ▲ 0.82%

In his address, Hashimoto also said corporate tax rates should be cut over the next three years to bring them in line with "international" levels. Japan's corporate tax rate is 46 percent, compared with 40% in the US and 33% in Britain. Speculation of tax cuts worth as much as 8-trillion yen sent the dollar down more than 2% Wednesday to as low as 130.80 yen. After Hashimoto's announcement yesterday, the dollar rose 1.7% to as high as 133.45 yen.

"In the foreign exchange market Wednesday, there was speculation that the size of the tax cut could be as large as 8-*trillion yen*," said Yuhiko Kaji, manager in the foreign exchange and international treasury division at Sakura Bank Ltd. in Tokyo.

"Foreign investors, in particular, can't help but conclude that they should sell yen on disappointment that the tax cut turns out to be 4-trillion yen."

"The dollar will likely rise against the yen because people will again look at the economic difference between the US and Japan," said Takayuki Togawa, manager of foreign exchange at Tokai Bank Ltd. in Tokyo. "Strong growth and higher interest rates in the US will lure investors to the dollar."

(Bloomberg)

Platinum rises on concern over Russian deliveries

Precious metals

Platinum and palladium rose as consumers grew increasingly concerned that the lack of deliveries from Russia is resulting in a shortage of metal. Russia, the world's dominant supplier of palladium and second-largest supplier of platinum, has failed to ship any of the metals so far this year amid delays in signing export licenses.

With no obvious sign of any Russian precious metals exports coming soon, palladium consumers such as carmakers, who use the metal in pollution control devices, and manufacturers of electronic goods such as mobile phones, are finding it more difficult to obtain metal.

Spot palladium rose $3.25 to $287.75 an ounce, while spot platinum rose $2.30 to $420.80 an ounce.

Gold fell amid concern that the planned European Central Bank's gold reserves will be smaller than some analysts were expecting. Gold for immediate delivery fell $1.20 to $308.25 an ounce in interbank trading.

Oil

Brent crude oil gained after Venezuela said it can't make all its oil deliveries next month, because it is part of a global producer accord which cut oil production in a bid to boost low oil prices.

Venezuela, along with nine other Organization of Petroleum Exporting Country members, and as many as seven non-OPEC producers have agreed to cut world oil supplies by about 2 percent in a bid to revive oil prices. Brokers said prices will likely recover as the affect of production cuts begins to be seen in spot oil markets, which in turn boosts futures prices.

Benchmark Brent blend crude oil futures for May delivery rose 17 cents to $14.15 a barrel.

COMMODITIES

Gold 307.75 ▼ 1.70%

Crude Oil 14.15 ▲ 0.17%

CRB 225.65 ▲ 0.04%

Others

Coffee rose as much as 1.2% on concern over lean supplies of robusta coffee beans from Vietnam and Indonesia. Coffee farmers in Vietnam are currently withholding beans from their 1997-98 coffee harvest due to expectations that the price of the cheaper, bitter tasting robusta coffee will rise further in London this year.

At the same time, Indonesia, usually the largest producer of robusta coffee, is expected to harvest a smaller coffee crop in 1998-99 after drought damaged coffee trees late last year.

Coffee for May delivery rose as much as $22 to $1,894 a metric ton on the London International Financial Futures and Options Exchange.

Zinc rose as lower Chinese exports helped offset sagging demand from East Asia. Exports from China, the world's largest producer, have declined from last year with 27% less of refined metal and zinc alloy shipped in the first two months of the year, according to Chinese customs figures. Three- month zinc rose $12 to $1,145 a metric ton on the London Metal Exchange.

(Bloomberg)

US bonds little changed as dollar tumbles vs. yen

US bonds were little changed, giving back early gains, as the dollar plunged and a news reports suggested Federal Reserve officials are less concerned that Asia's problems will slow the US economy.

The dollar fell as much as 3 percent from the day's highs after the Bank of Japan sold dollars for yen. At about the same time, Market News reported that Fed Gov. Susan Phillips said the Fed is less concerned Asia's woes will slow the US economy, and more focused on the strong jobs market and chances for faster growth and inflation, traders said.

"The market is vulnerable," said Tony Crescenzi, the government bond strategist at Miller Tabak Hirsch & Co. "The theme emerging from the Fed is that it's time to start playing up the domestic economy and playing down the forces from Asia."

The 30-year Treasury bond gave up gains of as much as 17/32 and was unchanged at 103 6/32, yielding 5.89%. Yields on two-year notes rose 3 basis points to 5.50%.

Earlier, bonds rose with the dollar amid doubts that tax cuts and spending plans announced by Japan's Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto will keep the economy out of recession. The dollar rose to 133.64 yen from 131.21 yen Wednesday, only to plunge after Japanese officials said the BOJ bought yen to boost the Japanese currency.

"Today we took decisive action in the exchange market following the announcement of policy measures designed to set the Japanese economy onto a firm recovery path," said Japan Finance Minister Hikaru Matsunaga.

BONDS

US 30 -year T-bill yield

5.89 no change

US Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin also roiled markets by saying he welcomed Japan's move to boost the yen, adding that he shares Japan's concern about the yen's weakness. He has been a staunch supporter of a strong dollar.

"Rubin's comments were a real surprise," said Mitchell Stapley, who oversees about $2.5 billion in bonds for Lion Street Asset Management in Columbus, Ohio. The comments, and the dollar's losses, "got us on edge," he said.

The Federal Reserve Bank of New York, the Treasury's agent in the foreign exchange market, sold dollars on behalf of the Bank of Japan, but didn't do so on behalf of the US, people familiar said.

A declining US currency makes dollar-denominated assets such as Treasuries less attractive to foreign investors. Events in the currency market overshadowed a government report showing a bigger-than-expected drop in producer prices in March.

The Labor Department said its index of prices paid to US factories, farmers and other producers fell 0.3% last month – the fifth consecutive monthly drop – while prices excluding volatile energy and food prices were unchanged.

Analysts surveyed by Bloomberg News, on average, forecast a 0.1% drop and no change, respectively.

"People have come to accept low inflation as being the norm," Mike Mullaney, who helps manage about $1 billion at Boston Partners, said before the report. That gave traders little incentive to buy, he said.

A separate report yesterday showed first-time claims for unemployment benefits fell 2,000 to 308,000 last week, a sign that the employment market is still strong.

(Bloomberg)

IRISH

Continued from Page 1

They hope to set the province on the path to a stable future after three decades of violence that has claimed 3,200 lives.

Blair's spokesman said "considerable progress" had been made in discussions on the thorny issue of cooperation between British-ruled Northern Ireland and the neighboring Irish republic.

"It has been hard work. I will not disguise the fact that there are continuing problems... and a lot more work to be done," the spokesman said.

Leaders of the eight participating parties emphasized that nobody wanted to waste the decision-making momentum created by the talks chairman's call for a peace settlement by midnight last night.

"We're going to have to stop the clock and work all night," said John Alderdice, who leads Alliance, the only party to draw much support from both Protestants and Catholics. "If we stop, even for a break because we're exhausted, this process will be finished."

CURRENCY

Continued from Page 1

An official close to the negotiations said there is an ongoing disagreement between the Treasury and the Bank of Israel over this issue. The central bank is refusing to lift restrictions on the institutions, until the Treasury agrees to implement tax changes which would govern their operations overseas.

While there are various reported differences among Netanyahu, Neeman, and Frenkel over the contents and timing of the announcement, the three are of one mind about the desired results of the changes: that the shekel be fully convertible and that the regime be changed from one where all is forbidden except for that specifically allowed, to one where all is permissible except for the few specific cases where restrictions will remain.

Although the announcement of the reforms is anticipated on or before Independence Day, April 30, the implementation will take longer, according to a senior bank source.

مكتبة الأصل

Hamas's explosive divide

Israeli and PA security sources link the killing of bomb maker Muhi Sharif to a feud that has spread throughout the organization. Steve Rodan reports

Palestinians carry Sharif's body out of the Ramallah mosque during his funeral last week. (AP)

Nearly a year ago Ghazi Hamad wrote a little-noticed article in Hamas's weekly newspaper *Al-Risalah*. Using the terms and comparisons associated with Christianity and Martin Luther some 350 years ago, he called for a reformation of the Islamic movement.

Hamad is as establishment as Hamas can get. He is *Al-Risalah*'s editor, and his voice expresses the sentiments of much of the movement's rank and file.

On March 23, Hamas leaders from around the world gathered for a two-day meeting in Jedda, Saudi Arabia. The debate was about the future of the Islamic movement. According to Arab sources who monitored the proceedings, it was rancorous.

Representatives from Syria, Jordan and other countries pressed for an offensive against Israel. They argued that Hamas has the capability to launch a series of massive terrorist attacks against Israel, thus restoring the respect and prominence in the Arab world that has been eroding over the last six months, ever since the organization failed to respond to the Khaled Mashaal assassination attempt in Jordan.

Most Hamas leaders from the Gaza Strip disagreed. They countered that Hamas attacks against Israel would strengthen the government of Binyamin Netanyahu, lead to renewed closures of the territories, and provoke a crackdown by the Palestinian Authority.

Meanwhile, they pointed out, Hamas was gaining support everywhere, winning elections among university students and professional associations, and maintaining social services in much of Gaza and the West Bank.

NEARLY a week later, the disagreement turned violent. The March 29 killing of bomb maker Muhi Sharif as part of what both Israeli and Palestinian security sources term a feud within the Hamas organization has pitted much of its political leadership against the military wing, as well as factionalizing the Izzadin Kassam brigade.

The infighting has spread throughout the organization, including its political wing, Hamas analysts say. Hamas spokesman Abdul Aziz Rantisi is being called "the Likudnik," a reference to what Palestinian sources term his hard-line approach to Israel. In contrast, senior activist Mahmoud A-Zahar is defined as a "Laborite."

Virtually nobody wants to talk about the divisions.

"I wouldn't say anything to *The Jerusalem Post* – you know why," Rantisi said yesterday, referring to the storm he provoked by an interview last weekend in which he accused the PA of being involved in Sharif's death.

The only consensus Hamas can achieve is the conviction that it must restore its credibility among Palestinians by attacking Israel – and soon. A senior Israeli security source says Hamas leader Sheikh Ahmed Yassin has approved a large-scale attack on Israeli or Jewish targets as a way of demonstrating the organization's recovery and reviving morale. The question is when the attack will be launched.

Ignoring Hamas's recent setbacks and choosing instead to repeat themes he has hammered on for years, Yassin has issued a call to the Arab world that some Palestinian analysts regard as a plea to save the collapsing organization. Yassin does not mention the PA or Hamas infighting.

"We are calling upon you to pray that God will help Jerusalem be rescued from the Israeli occupying enemy," Yassin's April 6 letter reads. "The peace negotiation with the Israeli occupying enemy was a big deception, witnessed by all large countries of the world.

"The Jews don't know anything but the agreement of cemeteries and killing innocents, and the humiliation of honorable people."

THOSE within the movement say the seeds of the feud were planted when the PA was established in 1994. The big question arose: What should be Hamas's role in the Palestinian entity?

"The discussion involved several options, and is similar to the debate now in Hizbullah in Lebanon," says Wadie Abu Nassar, a lecturer at the Open University with close ties to the PA and Palestinian movements. "One option was that Hamas should be a political party only. Others said it should remain a military group. Others wanted it to be both."

For about three years the debate remained muted – chiefly because of the absence of a leader in Hamas. Sheikh Ahmed Yassin was ill and in jail; the military organization received much of its orders from Hamas's leadership in Jordan and Syria. The group's military wing, Izzadin Kassam, was seen as having a free hand.

The release of Yassin last October from an Israeli prison changed all that.

Both Israeli and Palestinian security sources agree that Yassin did not intend to be a figurehead in the Islamic movement. His aim has been to become both an active spiritual figure in Hamas and a policy-maker. In other words, to have everybody accountable to him.

PA Chairman Yasser Arafat supported Yassin. He has known the sheikh since the 1950s, when both were student members of the Islamic Brotherhood, and preferred to deal with his returning neighbor in Gaza rather than Hamas representatives in Jordan, Syria or Sudan. Unlike those outsiders, he felt, Yassin would come to understand what Arafat believed to be the cost of jihad – US pressure, Israeli closures, and a drop in international support.

How successful has Yassin been in controlling Hamas? It depends whom you talk to. Many Hamas political wing members say Yassin remains a figurehead.

"He's like an Ovadia Yosef of Shas," a West Bank Hamas veteran says, "except that he doesn't have any power. People see him as a spiritual leader, a mystic, perhaps – but no one in the military wing asks him anything."

Israeli security sources believe Yassin has quickly made up for the time he lost in jail. He may have his detractors in Gaza, they say, but last week he received a royal welcome in Saudi Arabia. And the Saudis are leading financial supporters of the organization.

These sources say Yassin's policy of restraint is the main reason Hamas hasn't carried out a major terrorist bombing since his return.

The fear is that Yassin may sacrifice long-term goals for short-term expediency in ordering an attack on Israel

"He is very powerful, and he has influenced the organization greatly," a senior security source says. "Believe me, if Yassin's out of the country, he's not on vacation."

The Open University's Abu Nassar takes the middle ground between these views. But he is certain Yassin intends to be the real leader of Hamas.

"We cannot ignore the sheikh's influence," he says. I believe that he lost a lot of power while he was in jail. But he is trying to make a comeback. I think the PA will help him if he adopts a moderate circle. He has a lot of support among the younger circles as a religious figure."

Yassin continues to be cautious. He has stemmed public accusations by Hamas against the PA or Arafat.

Hours after Rantisi publicly accused the PA of participating in Sharif's assassination, he changed that tune, limiting his criticism to the PA inquiry committee.

The only factor in Hamas now willing to accuse the PA publicly is Izzadin Kassam, through leaflets or cassettes.

In the latest video cassette, a man whose face is masked by a keffiyeh identifies himself as Adel Awadallah, whom the PA accused of killing Sharif. He blames Palestinian Preventive Security chief Jibril Rajoub for ordering Sharif's death after he was warned to stop persecuting Hamas activists.

An earlier Hamas leaflet was similar in tone. "The PA is trying to satisfy Israel by making false claims and accusing some Hamas activists in the assassination," the leaflet reads. "These claims are not acceptable to us. The heroes of Kassam are competing for martyrdom, and not for positions [in the PA]."

Yassin's choice, Israeli and Palestinian security sources say, appears to be diverting Hamas's attention from the PA to Israel. They say the sheikh has given approval for at least one large-scale attack inside Israel. They add that Hamas representatives abroad might decide to follow this up with attacks on Jewish targets in Europe.

"Yassin wants to preserve his legitimacy," a Palestinian security source says. "He can't blame the PA or admit to strife [within Hamas]. So the third option is Israel."

PA and Hamas sources agree that, whatever happens, Hamas will not attribute Sharif's death to an accident. That would be the worst possible message from the organization at a time when it wants to restore credibility among the thousands of Palestinians who are calling for revenge.

"I understand Hamas," the security source continues. "They want to demonstrate their legitimacy, not their mistakes. They want their fighters to be seen as saints."

THE RACE is on to try to contain a Hamas attack. Israeli and Palestinian security sources say Arafat is warning the organization against revenge.

Last week PA security officials cautioned Rantisi and other Hamas leaders in Gaza that they would be held responsible if an attack occurred.

Whether Arafat succeeds in warding off an attack remains a source of debate within Israeli security circles.

Many in the General Security Services assert that Arafat has only limited influence over Hamas. The organization is simply too powerful to be steamrolled, they say. IDF military intelligence assesses that Arafat can pull the strings needed to maintain quiet for as long as it suits his purposes.

Abu Nassar says his concern is that a splinter group from Izzadin Kassam may decide to launch a massive terrorist attack regardless of whether or not the organization's leadership has given the green light. The key, he says, is Hamas's timing.

"I'm not worried [about an attack] for these few days, but at the end of April," he says. "Then everybody will see the 50th anniversary celebrations in Israel. All the Palestinians watch Israel television, and this will not be any different.

"It will cause something bad among Hamas fighters. And they may move to do something to make it difficult for Israel – with or without the approval of their superiors."

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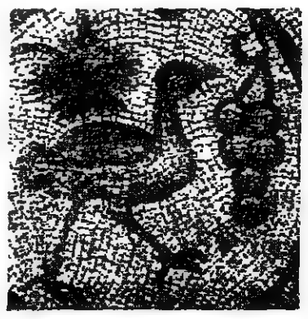

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Khatami greets the director of the UN International Drug Control Program last week: Was Karbaschi's arrest the reactionaries' way of telling the president he'd better firm up his approach to the West? (AP)

Reformist Mayor Karbaschi at a press conference in Teheran last year: His detention has increased his following – and that has the hard-liners worried. (AP)

Iran: Anatomy of a showdown

There's a great deal more to the arrest of Teheran's popular mayor on corruption charges than meets the eye, experts tell **Dan Izenberg**

The first public confrontation between reactionaries and moderates in the Islamic fundamentalist regime of Iran is taking place these days over the arrest on corruption charges of reformist Teheran Mayor Gholamhossein Karbaschi, according to Iranian expert Menashe Amir, head of Israel Radio's Persian-language service.

"I have no doubt Karbaschi's arrest was motivated by purely political considerations as a way of hurting President Mohammed Khatami and undermining his position and those of his supporters," said Amir.

It is no secret that Khatami's overwhelming victory against *Majlis [Iranian parliamentary]* speaker Ali Akbar Nateq-Nouri in Iran's presidential elections eight months ago was not to the liking of the reactionary clerics, led by Iranian supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. Khatami, who won the hearts of Iranian women and youngsters by stressing equal rights, greater personal freedom and more openness to the West, captured more than 70 percent of the vote.

According to Amir, Karbaschi was one of Khatami's strongest supporters in the election. During the campaign Karbaschi put Teheran at his disposal and his newspaper openly supported Khatami's candidacy.

He also managed to antagonize the reactionaries for other reasons. "He's 44 years old and very successful," said Amir. "During the 10 years he has run Teheran, he's done a lot to make the city beautiful. He cleaned it up and built many parks. He also established Teheran's first modern newspaper, which keeps away from religious issues.

"All in all, he's a modern man. The reactionaries have frequently accused him and his newspaper of preaching moral laxness," added Amir.

On Saturday, police arrested Karbaschi on charges of graft and embezzlement in connection with several building projects in the city. The prosecution has accused the mayor of personally ordering City Hall officials to siphon off public funds.

The order for his detention was handed down by Chief Justice Ayatollah Mohammed Yazdi, who is in charge of Iran's entire judicial apparatus – including the courts and the state prosecution. Yazdi is a hard-liner who was hand-picked for the job by Khamenei.

"Khatami isn't so moderate in his concept of Islam. But he belongs to the pragmatic school. He believes that the rulers must ease up on the constraints they have imposed on the nation in order to preserve the Islamic regime they have installed" — Iran expert Soli Shahvar

Karbaschi was thrown into Evin prison and forced to don a prison uniform. His trial is expected to take place in less than three weeks.

Menashe Amir believes the charges were trumped up. "According to the estimations of many people in Iran – the president, the minister of interior and many members of parliament – he is an honest man. But in Iran, if one tries hard enough, it's always possible to find something wrong."

Iran expert Soli Shahvar is also skeptical about the charges. "Karbaschi didn't do anything now that he didn't do two years ago. The charges are simply a pretext. The hard-liners are signaling to Khatami – you'd better back off."

Amir thinks Khamenei is behind Karbaschi's arrest. So far, however, Khamenei has not spoken out in public on the affair. Perhaps, before putting himself on the line, he is testing the waters to see which way public opinion will go.

"Some people think that in this particular case, Khamenei may be trying to strike a balance between Khatami and Yazdi," said Amir.

Shahvar believes that Khamenei himself is only a front man for the real leader of the reactionaries in Iran – Ayatollah Jenati, chairman of the Council of the Guardians of the Revolution.

According to Amir and Shahvar, the dispute between the reactionaries and the liberals may not be that easy for Westerners to understand. Both of them grant that Khatami is a liberal. But according to Shahvar, his approach is mainly tactical. He is just as religious as the hard-liners and was a member-in-good-standing of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini's Islamic revolution in 1978.

"Khatami is not so moderate in his concept of Islam," explained Shahvar. "But he belongs to the pragmatic school. He believes that the rulers must ease up on the constraints they have imposed on the nation in order to preserve the Islamic regime they have installed."

In concrete terms, Khatami hasn't done all that much to expand personal freedoms during his eight months in office, according to Amir.

"All in all, his achievements are disappointing," he said. "But he has sown seeds that could bear fruit. He talks about a civil society, equality before the law, justice, individual rights, etc. He has even demonstrated a pinch of moderation in his approach to Israel and the peace process. These are very small achievements but they shouldn't be dismissed or underestimated."

What seems to have aroused the ire of the reactionaries more than anything else is Khatami's overtures to the US. Last week, an Iranian wrestling team received a rousing welcome in Stillwater, Oklahoma. It was a sequel to a groundbreaking visit by an American team to Teheran in February, and part of a series of cultural and academic exchanges between the two countries which started at the beginning of the year.

Khatami's courting of the US is part of his pragmatic approach. He believes Iran cannot reject modernity and the technological revolution and cannot participate in the benefits they offer without help and interaction with the West.

That attitude is anathema to the ideological purists. "Don't forget that more than the revolution was aimed at the Shah, it was aimed at the neo-imperialism of the West, particularly the US," said one expert who asked for anonymity. "The modernism that the Shah introduced was too rapid, often accompanied with violence and didn't even succeed. It caused cultural alienation."

"The reactionaries live by ideology," said Shahvar. "The minute you try to change something very basic in that ideology, they scream. According to their beliefs, America is the big Satan. How can Khatami now come and say Satan is not Satan?"

"Khatami talks about a civil society and individual rights. He's even demonstrated a pinch of moderation in his approach to Israel. These are very small achievements – but they shouldn't be underestimated." — Menashe Amir, Israel Radio

Underlying the ideological purity of the mullahs, however, is a fear for their positions, and perhaps their lives. "The leaders are insecure," said Shahvar. "They have their own army, the Revolutionary Guards, which is parallel to the Iranian army. It has its own infantry, armored corps, navy and airforce and ranks similar to military ranks. That is the foundation of the regime. Even after so many purges, the leaders still don't trust the army. There are 150,000 Revolutionary Guards surrounding Teheran. They are deployed there because the leaders of the regime are afraid."

They have reason to be, according to Shahvar. Twice during the reign of the Shah, the Iranian regime eased up on the people. Both times it led to unrest.

"The leaders know that the nation which overthrew the Shah, could just as well overthrow them," said the expert who declined to be identified.

Khatami, according to Shahvar, is just as anxious to preserve the Islamic regime as the other leaders. But he believes that is only possible by granting more freedom. He too, however, realizes that it is a risky strategy.

Meanwhile, Karbaschi is languishing in jail and Khatami and his government have not kept silent. On Monday, Khatami met with Khamenei and demanded the mayor's release. His ministers, including those who do not belong to the moderate camp, have also unanimously backed Karbaschi.

Interior Minister Abdollah Nouri issued a statement questioning the process of judicial investigation and expressing doubts about the competency of those in charge of the case. According to Menashe Amir, the fact that the entire government has spoken out in Karbaschi's defense is significant. Khatami sent the protocol of the cabinet meeting to Khamenei, he said.

How will the crisis be resolved? It's too early to determine, the experts say. According to Shahvar, Khatami will continue to try to persuade Khamenei to release Karbaschi and drop the charges against him.

If he fails, he may have to pay a ransom for Karbaschi's release by issuing some sort of anti-Western proclamation. If he does, says Shahvar, the West will regard it as nothing more than lip service.

"There are public pronouncements and there are genuine intentions," said Shahvar. "Maybe Khatami will make an anti-Western statement, but he will continue to work towards rapprochement, and I'm sure the West will understand that."

But another scenario is also possible. The public – which clearly supports Khatami – has not spoken out on the Karbaschi affair, so far.

According to Amir, however, Karbaschi is a popular mayor and his popularity has grown because of his arrest. A few days ago, the mayor's newspaper, *Hamshahri*, quoted Teheran residents as demanding that people show their support for Karbaschi by gathering in public. The paper has stopped short of actually calling for public protests.

If the people come out in support of Khatami and Karbaschi, there is a good chance the hard-liners will back down, said Shahvar. There are precedents for this. The government once banned videos and satellite dishes by law. But the people found ways of smuggling in the videos and setting up satellites in their homes. When the religious leaders saw they couldn't enforce the laws, they discreetly dropped them.

The difference is that this time there will be nothing discreet about a retreat. Many people in many places are watching Iran these days.

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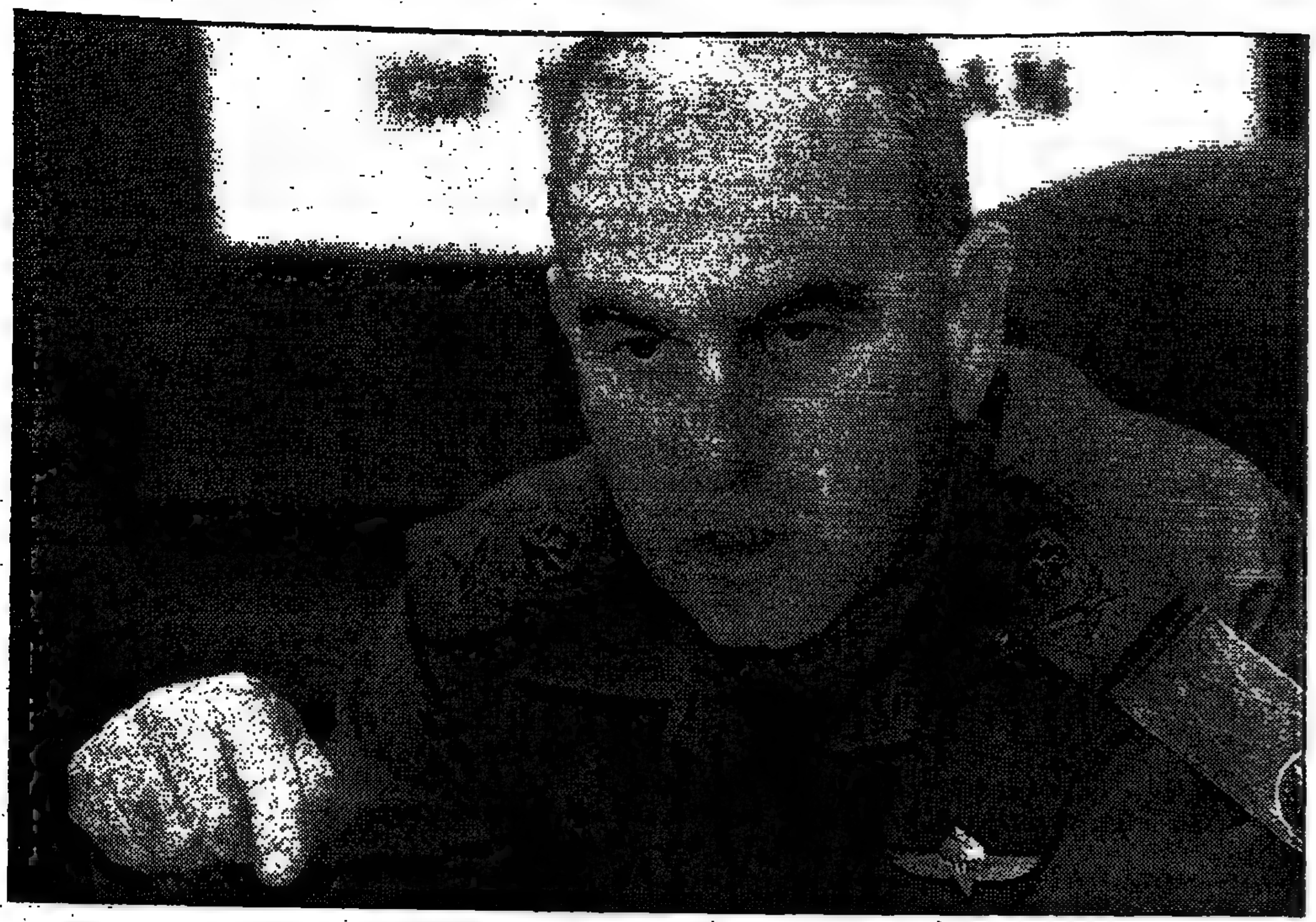

Vilna'i: marked early on for greatness in the army – but his virtue-laden resume could work against him. (IDF Spokesman)

Who'll be next chief of staff?

The two contenders for the army's top slot are polar opposites – the tall, polished Ashkenazi from an elite Jerusalem family vs. the stocky, unassuming Sephardi who came here as a boy. Arieh O'Sullivan reports

Over the next couple of weeks, two top generals are likely to be summoned to Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai's office, where their destinies will be laid out before them.

For one of them the decision will be either the consummation of a life-long obsession or will spell ultimate rejection. For the other, it will be either an entirely expected appointment, or an invitation to stay and fight another day.

The job being offered is the 16th chief of general staff of the Israel Defense Forces. The two leading candidates, Maj.-Gen. Matan Vilna'i and Maj.-Gen. Shaul Mofaz seem to have similar backgrounds. Each has grown up in the ranks of the paratroopers, commanded elite units and served as deputy chief of staff. But they are actually polar opposites.

Vilna'i, 54, went to Harvard. Mofaz, 50, took a course at the US Marine Corps Command and Staff College in Quantico. Vilna'i was consistently at the top of the class. Mofaz failed the officer's entrance exam a record three times. Vilna'i is tall and thin. Mofaz is short and stocky. Vilna'i was born in Jerusalem to an elite Ashkenazi family. Mofaz was born in Iran and immigrated at age nine with his Sephardi family. Vilna'i and Mordechai are on speaking terms, barely. Mofaz and Mordechai are close friends.

There really wasn't supposed to be much of a choice about who would replace Shahak when his term expires in July. When it came to experience and stature, no one came close to Vilna'i. Promoted to brigadier-general 20 years ago at the age of 34, he was destined to be a shoo-in for the top slot when the lieutenant-general steps down.

From early on, even at military boarding school before he enlisted, Vilna'i was marked for greatness in the army. He is the son of geographer Prof. Ze'ev Vilna'i, author of the pocket *Guide to Israel*, who was a true believer in a greater Israel. The younger Vilna'i was inducted into the IDF Paratroopers Corps in 1962.

During the Six-Day War he served as a deputy paratrooper battalion commander. He later commanded an elite reconnaissance unit in the disastrous 1968 battle of Karameh, in which 28 IDF soldiers were killed trying to smash a PLO terrorist base in Jordan. (While enemy casualties were high, the battle shattered the illusion among Arabs that the IDF was invincible.) After that Vilna'i commanded an airborne battalion and spent the Yom Kippur War as a brigade operations officer. By 1975 he was appointed commander of the choice Paratrooper Brigade.

In the Entebbe rescue operation in 1976, Col. Vilna'i was second in command to the operation's leader, Dan Shomron. When he was named chief infantry and paratroops officer and promoted to brigadier-general in 1978, Vilna'i was the youngest general in the IDF's modern age.

No one has served as a general in the IDF longer than Matan Vilna'i. In 1982, Vilna'i became an armored corps commander in Lebanon. After an academic leave at Harvard in 1984, he was promoted to major-general and head of the Manpower Branch in 1985.

In 1989, at the height of the intifada, he replaced Mordechai as OC Southern Command and was responsible for implementing the Cairo Agreement and the IDF's pullback in the Gaza Strip. These roles were cited as a decisive factor behind the late prime minister and defense minister Yitzhak Rabin's decision to name him, after five years in the south, as deputy chief of general staff in 1995.

Described as "an officer and a gentleman," Vilna'i has a reputation for spit and polish and is known to appear at a dusty field exercise freshly shaven with a pressed uniform. He recently confided to being an avid reader of Tom Clancy novels, which dwell a lot on modern warfare.

As deputy chief of general staff, Vilna'i was behind the IDF's reorganization and oversaw the updating of the IDF's "strategic concepts."

Everything was planned for his ascendancy to the throne. Ehud Barak had served under Dan Shomron and later Shahak served under Barak. Vilna'i expected to serve the full four and a half years under Shahak. Suddenly last July his plans came to an unexpected halt.

A year after assuming office, Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai unceremoniously dumped Vilna'i. The official reason was to avoid having to appoint a new chief of staff and deputy at the same time, and to encourage competition for the army's top job.

But it wasn't the first time the paths of the two had crossed. In 1995, Mordechai had hoped to be named deputy chief of staff. Instead, Shahak chose Vilna'i, slamming the door on Mordechai's military advancement. Just a year later, however, Mordechai made his triumphant return as defense minister.

MOFAZ shadowed Vilna'i in his military career, begun in 1966. He too rose to command the paratrooper reconnaissance unit in the Yom Kippur War. He participated in the Entebbe raid and commanded the Paratrooper Brigade, albeit a dozen years after Vilna'i.

In 1988, Mofaz was promoted to brigadier-general and commanded an armored division. He was then fast-tracked to the general staff. He led IDF troops in Lebanon and in August 1993 was promoted to major-general and appointed as commander of IDF forces in Judea and Samaria.

In late 1994, Mofaz took over as OC Southern Command from Vilna'i. He held the post until March 1996 when he was named as OC Planning Branch.

Mofaz may not have the social graces and charm of Vilna'i, but he has left his mark on the army through his exploits.

"There are those who say they are earmarked from early on," Mofaz was quoted as saying in an interview with *Ma'ariv* soon after he took over from Vilna'i. "But with me that wasn't the case."

Mofaz's triple failure to pass the officer's entrance exam is a curiosity which has become part of IDF folklore.

He gained a measure of fame after an ambush against Palestinian gunmen in 1968, when as a sergeant, he commanded a squad in the Jordan Valley.

After spotting the intruders in a wadi, he ignored regulations and split the force, with one part charging and the other shooting cover fire. They ended up killing five terrorists, and this type of ambush came to be called the "Mofaz Ambush." It won him enough recognition to get him sent back to the officer's course despite his previous exam results.

As fate would have it, Mofaz returned 15 years later to command the officers' school.

IT WAS no accident that the Iraqi-born Mordechai chose Mofaz to replace Vilna'i. The two Sephardi military men have been close friends for over 30 years. Most of Mofaz's military service has been spent serving under Mordechai. He was a non-commissioned officer in Mordechai's company and served as a captain in a battalion commanded by Mordechai. When Mordechai was OC Northern Command, Mofaz headed a division in the north. When Mordechai was OC Central Command, Mofaz commanded a division there.

In some ways, appointing Mofaz as deputy chief of general staff was for Mordechai a fulfillment of everything he himself wanted in the IDF but never achieved.

The unassuming Mofaz does not pretend to emulate the erudite Vilna'i. In small forums Mofaz can be warm and charismatic, but he has difficulty getting across in front of large audiences.

This was evident during the recent Iraq crisis, when Mofaz appeared stiff and it was decided to put another major-general in charge of meeting with the media, Maj.-Gen. Gaby Ashkenazy, assistant chief of operations.

Mofaz is also awkward looking – bald with a swelling "spare tire" around his midriff and a knack for making even a starched uniform appear wrinkled on his clown-like frame.

Nevertheless, Mordechai has courted Mofaz as a serious candidate to replace Shahak. Mofaz often accompanies Mordechai during his travels, and would not be unexpected for their shared Sephardi immigrant background to play a part in Mordechai's decision.

ETHNIC background became an issue in the recent presidential elections, in which Shaul Amor was touted the candidate of the "second Israel." Some say the Defense Ministry would not be immune to such influence.

But those close to Mordechai maintain that he does not take the Ashkenazi-Sephardi issue very seriously. Mordechai has told his aides that he hasn't yet made his decision, but that when he does it will be purely on the grounds of merit.

Still, Mordechai is known to hold grudges. Mofaz has let it be known that he considers himself a serious candidate for the top job. Flattering reports and profiles that have recently appeared in the Hebrew press can be traced to Mordechai's office, says columnist Uri Dan.

"The people behind the campaign for Mofaz are the Ministry of Defense and Mofaz himself," says Dan, who supports Vilna'i. "By all reasonable accounts, Vilna'i should be the next chief of general staff. Otherwise mediocrity ... will take over."

Mordechai insists he hasn't made up his mind yet

In an interview published recently in *Yediot Aharonot*, Vilna'i was quoted as saying that he has fought for this role for his whole life and doesn't intend giving up.

Vilna'i is currently studying at a Washington research institute, but last month he urgently flew home to meet with Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu when it appeared that Mordechai was growing serious about Mofaz. Vilna'i has known Netanyahu since childhood, when their fathers were close friends. Unlike his father, Matan Vilna'i has managed to avoid being politically cast throughout his military career.

Ironically, Vilna'i's virtuous resume may prove his downfall. Those close to him say the 35-year military career has tired him out. If chosen to replace Shahak he would be the oldest chief of staff to take charge in the history of the IDF.

Shahak has reportedly withdrawn himself from the next round of general staff promotions. Barak named a number of officers to the general staff before he left. It appears that Shahak has decided not to do the same and left the reshuffle entirely up to Mordechai.

"It is difficult, but Mordechai will try not to choose Vilna'i," Dan says. "And he will encourage this campaign of competition."

But Vilna'i would be a better choice, Dan believes.

"A strong and independent minister of defense needs to surround himself with strong and independent-minded people. And not yes men," Dan says. "They may be afraid of his intellect, but Vilna'i is head and shoulders above Mofaz."

A DARK-HORSE third candidate being touted periodically as another possible candidate for IDF chief is Defense Ministry Director-General Ilan Biran. A former OC Central Command, Biran, 52, poses serious competition for Vilna'i. Biran reached his glory through the Golani Brigade and was promoted to major-general in 1989, when he was appointed as head of logistics.

But the latest word is that Biran is out of the running since it would be highly unusual to return a retired general to service. But there are precedents: Yehuda Wilk was called back from retirement to become Police Inspector General, and David Ivry was asked to rejoin the IDF as deputy chief of staff after he had retired from service.

If Vilna'i is rejected he will most likely quit the army in a huff. If Shaul Mofaz doesn't get the nod, he'll probably wait out Vilna'i's term and try again next time when the other candidate will most likely be Moshe Dayan's nephew, OC Central Command Maj.-Gen. Uzi Dayan.

Mofaz: failed the officer's entrance exam three times but got in after an outstanding exploit and ended up commanding the officers' school. (Alon Ron/Israel Sun)

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What kind of cup did Jesus use?

Was the wine cup passed around at the Last Supper an ornate vessel or simply made of clay? Karen Laub meets a biblical scholar who believes he's found the answer at Qumran

In the movie *The Last Crusade*, Indiana Jones stands before rows of goblets and, in a life-or-death moment, must decide which one is the Holy Grail – the wine cup used by Jesus in the Last Supper and invested with miraculous powers.

Ignoring the richly adorned chalices, Jones carefully lifts up a plain vessel and says, "That's the cup of a carpenter."

The movie fantasy is close to reality, according to US Bible scholar Stephen Pfann who, based on new archaeological clues, says the Holy Grail probably was a simple clay cup.

Pfann has taken a fresh look at the pottery of the Essenes, a sect of devout Jews who lived in isolation in the cliffs above the Dead Sea at the time of Jesus and are believed to have had some influence on the world of Jesus and his followers.

Pfann found similarities between the Essenes' ritual meals and the Last Supper, and concludes that the communal wine cup they passed around was likely similar to the sacred vessel Jesus used.

The Essenes' communal cup, made of wafer-thin clay and standing just a little taller than a coffee mug, "is the only parallel we have for a communal cup contemporary with the time of the Last Supper," said Pfann, head of the Center for the Study of Early Christianity.

Pfann's theory has drawn mixed reviews from fellow scholars.

Pfann's discovery is backed up by the Jewish/Roman historian Josephus

Joe Zias, a former curator of the Israel Antiquities Authority, said the Last Supper was a Seder in which the finest table wares would have been used, not a clay cup.

"It's such a pedestrian piece of pottery that you definitely wouldn't use it for any type of ceremonial function," Zias said.

However, archeologist Fr. Jerome Murphy O'Connor said that while wealthy Jews might have used more ornate tableware, perhaps made of glass or metal, Jesus and his followers had little money.

"In nine out of 10 cases, pottery would have been the favorite for poor people," said Murphy O'Connor, a scholar at Ecole Biblique, the archeological institute that first excavated Qumran.

The Holy Grail has fascinated believers for centuries. Legend says it was brought to England by a follower of Jesus, Joseph of Arimathea in 63 A.D. In stories about King Arthur and his knights, the search for the lost grail became a central theme.

Despite the wealth of stories, little was ever said about what the Holy Grail looked like. Some say it was a chipped wooden bowl, while others described it as an onyx goblet.

Pfann believes the most reliable clues come from the Essenes – authors of the Dead Sea Scrolls – whose Qumran compound was first excavated in the 1950s.

In reviewing the excavation notes of French archeologist Roland de Vaux – Pfann is working on an English translation and a classification of the Qumran pottery – he found the same ratio of cups, bowls and plates in two sealed pantries in the compound. From this he concluded that each sect member had his own bowl, each three or four dipped into a plate and each nine or 10 shared a wine cup.

Israeli archaeologist Hanan Eshel, who has excavated at Qumran, said it would have been impossible to determine the exact use of each piece of pottery, but Pfann said wine cups are easily distinguishable because of their thin rim.

About half the pottery pieces in the pantries had a beige rim, possibly a mark they were restricted for ritual use, Pfann said.

The discovery fit accounts by Jewish/Roman historian Josephus, who says the Essenes' meals were centerpieces of their sacred rituals. After working for five hours after daybreak, sect members immersed themselves in ritual baths and changed from grubby work clothes into white garments for a late breakfast. As they sat on mats in groups of 10, a prayer leader said grace over bread and wine. The ritual was repeated at nightfall.

The Last Supper had similar elements, Pfann said.

During the banquet, a blend of a Seder and new ritual, the disciples sat around a table and Jesus blessed the wine before a cup was passed around. "And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he said 'Take this and divide it among yourselves.'" (Luke 22-17). At least two people shared a dipping dish.

Some Qumran pottery is on display at the Israel Museum. Other pieces are still being patched together at the Ecole Biblique. In the institute's pottery room, two reddish-brown clay cups stood on a shelf in a corner during a recent visit.

Picking one up, Pfann said: "If we were to search for an image of the Holy Grail, this simple cup is probably as close as we'd get."

(AP)

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Normal service (7 a.m.-5 p.m.) will be resumed on April 19, 1998.

We wish all our readers a Happy Pessah.

Why is this family different from all other families?

Although many of us hear Aramaic once only a year at Pessah time, there are a few families in Israel who speak it every day. **Herb Keinon** reports

Amid an air of expectation and great solemnity, the heads of hundreds of thousands of Jewish households around the world will point to the matza on the Seder plate tonight and say: "Ha lahma anya di achalu avhatana b'ara d'mitzrayim. Kol dikfin, yete v'yechul. Kol disrich, yete v'yifsach."

Though the Pessah Seder is heavily laden with formal customs, these words will set into motion one of the Seder's unofficial traditions – the quick glance at the translation in the Haggada, be it in English, Hebrew, Russian or a host of other languages, to figure out what in the world is being said.

One man who won't need the translation for this part of the Seder, or for "Had gadya," is Mordechai Nissan, a 75-year-old Holon resident for whom Aramaic, or a variation called Nash Didan (literally, "our people"), *is his* mother tongue.

Both "Ha lahma anya," which launches the Seder, and "Had gadya," which closes it, are written in Aramaic.

"No," Nissan says emphatically. "Aramaic is not a dead language. My parents spoke it between them, and they spoke it to me."

This is something that comes as a surprise to many people who are familiar with Aramaic through holy books, such as the Book of Daniel, the Babylonian and Jerusalem Talmuds, and the daily prayer book.

But it is one thing to read Talmudic discussion in the tongue-twisting language and quite another to imagine people using it today in their everyday discourse.

"Halva madila (pass the milk)," says Yom Tov Budagow, 76, a Tel Aviv glove manufacturer, to his wife, attempting to demonstrate in a Tel Aviv café the functionality of the ancient language. The couple sits in the café and, showing the modern compatibility of the language, loudly and proudly name in Aramaic the various objects on the table.

The café is empty, so the exercise attracts no attention. But, Dina says, when she was speaking in her mother tongue to her husband on the phone from an office in the Tel Aviv municipality recently, six clerks — who were all religious — gathered around in disbelief to hear her use a language they vaguely recognized from the Talmud but had never heard in mundane, daily use.

"They asked me what language I was speaking," Budagow says. "When I said Aramaic, they laughed, didn't believe me, and said no one speaks that anymore."

The clerks were wrong.

According to *Ethnologue*, a reference book on world languages, there are some 20,000 people in Israel who speak a variation of Aramaic.

And not only do people speak it, they also sing it.

'Ha lahma anya,' which launches the Seder, and 'Had gadya,' which closes it, are written in Aramaic

Arik Mordechai, a 46-year-old Tel Aviv musician who specializes in World Music and whose parents came from Azerbaijan, recently released two discs of songs, most of them written and performed in Aramaic.

"It is a very rich language," Mordechai says, explaining why he writes songs in Aramaic, not exactly a best-selling language.

"It is authentically Jewish, very expressive. The language of Abraham's generation."

Mordechai says he was motivated by the fear that when his parents' generation dies off, the language will disappear.

"I took on this project so that my generation, and my children's generation, will take interest in the language, which is so beautiful," he says.

Mordechai called the group of musicians Nash Didan, after the language, and says that the discs come with explanations of the language and translations of the songs in order to pique the listener's interest in the tongue.

Lead vocalist Tali Amar doesn't speak the language, Mordechai says, "but she learned quite a bit."

Yitzhak Gluska, a lecturer at Bar-Ilan University's department of Hebrew and Semitic languages, says the variations of Aramaic spoken in Israel were imported from immigrants arriving from a region near the Azerbaijan, Turkish, Iranian and Iraqi borders.

Aramaic, which held sway in the ancient Near East from about the 8th century BCE to 700 CE, when it was supplanted by Arabic, was the language of the great Semitic empires Assyria and Babylon.

The language had two main dialects – the western dialect, which was extant in Israel at the time and in which much of the Jerusalem Talmud is written, and the eastern dialect, the language which is used in the Babylonian Talmud.

The Aramaic spoken by Jews in the Azerbaijan-Kurdistan region was similar to the western Aramaic dialect but with a heavy influx of Persian, Turkish and Arabic words, Gluska says.

He adds that Kurdistani Jews spoke a variation of Aramaic among themselves as a way to preserve their Jewish identity. The same, Budagow says, was true of Azerbaijani Jews.

"Azerbaijani Jews were dispersed all over," Budagow says. "In Georgia, Turkey, Kazakistan. But wherever we went, we spoke Nash Didan among ourselves. It was our language."

Budagow was born in Georgia, to Azerbaijani parents, and moved to Turkey before coming to Israel in 1942.

According to *Ethnologue*, the vast majority of those who speak various forms of Aramaic in Israel today are over 40.

Neither the Budagows, who have three children, nor Nissan, who has five, succeeded in passing the language on to their children.

"We were always embarrassed to speak it as children," says Dina Budagow, who was born and raised in Israel but whose parents were from Azerbaijan and spoke Nash Didan at home.

"When we tried to speak it to our children, they laughed and told us to speak in Hebrew."

Like so many other "Jewish languages," such as Ladino and Yiddish, it became, to a certain extent, a language spoken between parents when they didn't want the kids to understand.

Dina says that over the years there has been a revival of interest in the language among the older folk.

Dina and Yom Tov Budagow speak Aramaic, but they haven't succeeded in passing the language on to their children. (Sarit Uziely)

"People are trying to bring back memories of their grandparents," she says.

"So they speak their mother tongue. We get together with people from time to time and speak the language." She then mimics her daughter mimicking her, sitting around at night speaking Aramaic with elderly Azerbaijani Jews.

"I don't care what she thinks of those get-togethers," Dina says. "We enjoy them. They transport us back to a different time and leave us with a warm feeling."

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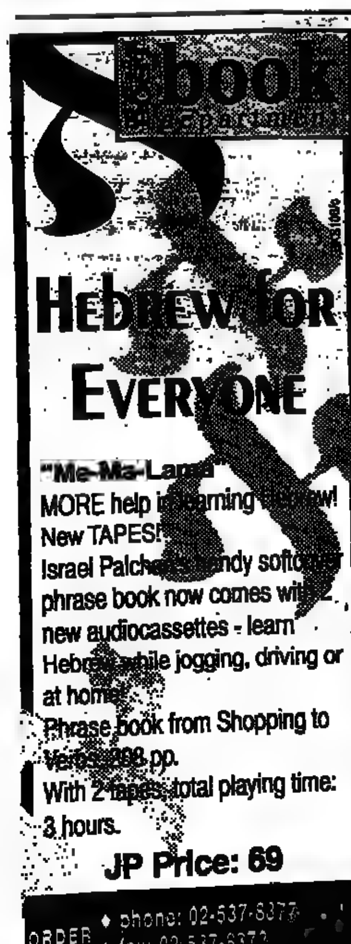

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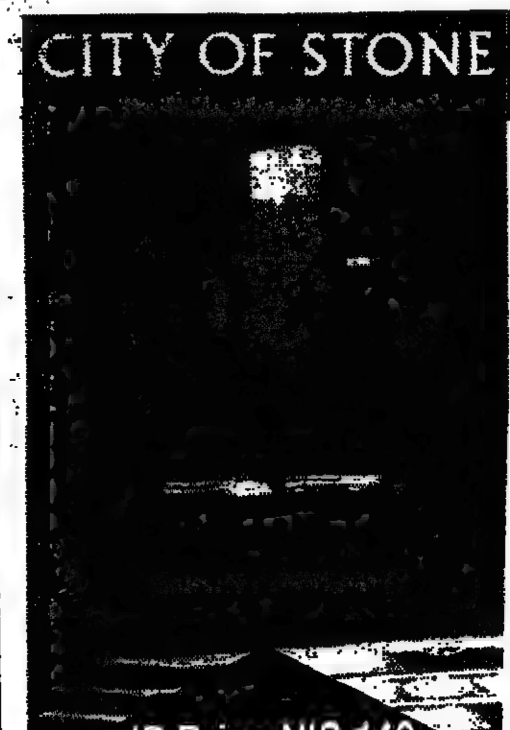

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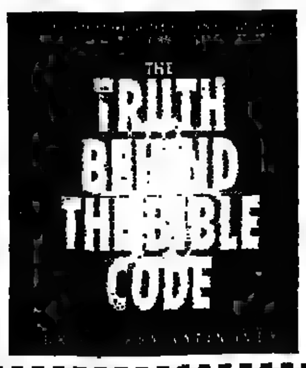

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The Haggada is their story

A whirlwind of Seders in the former USSR twins local students with young US Jews in a dynamic project. Amy Klein reports

It may be the essence of Pessah. But who can relate the Exodus to his or her own experience so that, as the Haggada commands, each and every one of us should see ourselves as if we "personally came out of Egypt?" Certainly the Jews of the former Soviet Union can. Denied the right to practice Judaism for two generations, their new-found freedom makes the Pessah message most poignant. But there's a sad irony: Though Jews in the former USSR are now permitted to celebrate Pessah, it's been so long that many don't remember how – or never learned.

This Pessah, when 26 students from the One-Year Program at Hebrew University's Rothberg School for Overseas Students join Ukrainian students to lead Seders throughout Ukraine, they will be bringing their knowledge to these Seders, learning at the same time first-hand from these newly freed Jews what Pessah is really about.

The North American 20-year-olds are being sent to Ukraine by the UJA to join the The Rudin Family Pessah Project.

Sponsored by the Samuel and May Rudin Family Foundation, the project trains local Hillel students to lead Seders for communities throughout the former USSR.

Three years ago 60 Hillel students led about 20 Seders there. The project went over so well that this year 500 Hillel students will be conducting 250 Seders.

This whirlwind of Seders will not be the typical event where families read through the Haggada and perform its rituals during the first two nights of the holiday. The Seders will be conducted throughout all eight days of Pessah for children, singles, the elderly, the community – whatever that community may be.

What makes these gatherings Seders is not the consumption of four cups of wine, three measures of matza and a dollop of *maror* and *harosset* during the recitation of every word of the Haggada. It is the *maggid* – making sure these Jews tell their story, their journey from slavery to freedom.

Children in what used to be the Soviet Union hear Seder songs for maybe the first time.

Beginning in 1985, under Gorbachev's policies of *glasnost* and *perestroika*, small pockets of underground Jewish activism began to surface in Russia. In 1989, the first wave of Russian Jews – previously termed "refuseniks" and imprisoned or denied jobs – were allowed to emigrate to Israel.

With the collapse of Communism in 1991 and the move to a semi-democratic system, religion was finally made legal in what is now a commonwealth of 12 independent states known as the CIS.

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, the Joint Distribution Committee began trying to locate the Jewish communities in the former Soviet Union.

The Joint (funded by the UJA) focused on organizing these communities by providing Jewish education, resources and programming. Today there are 220 Sunday schools, 50 day schools and 50 universities teaching Jewish Studies.

Three years ago the Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation funded Hillel – the foundation for Jewish student life – to go into the former USSR and set up local chapters in communities as identified by the Joint.

Rabbi Yossi Goldman, founder and director of Hillel in the area, says that today's 17 Hillel centers (another eight are on the way) differ from the campus-based student organizations in America and Israel in that they are community-based organizations which work throughout the year enlisting Jewish students to participate and lead Jewish educational, cultural and social programs, often centered around Shabbat and Jewish holidays.

That the Hillel centers are run and joined by local people makes them one component in the much-talked-about "Jewish revival" in the former Soviet Union.

Zhenya Stelmach, a third-year law student at Kiev's International Solomon University, dates her Jewish awakening to last Pessah's Seder.

"I returned from the Hillel Seders glowing. When I told my parents, my father asked me to bring Pessah back to his home. So I conducted a Seder for my family. My father and grandfather participated. My father sang the *ma nishtana* and cried."

"You never know what to expect," said Esther Abramowitz. The assistant director of Hillel at Hebrew University accompanied the 26 UJA-sponsored students last year and is also with them this year in Ukraine, one of Hillel's three regions in the former Soviet Union.

"We expected a giant community Seder in one town, but only found eight old men and a 12-year-old boy; and in another town we prepared for a small Seder – and found the room packed with 160 people."

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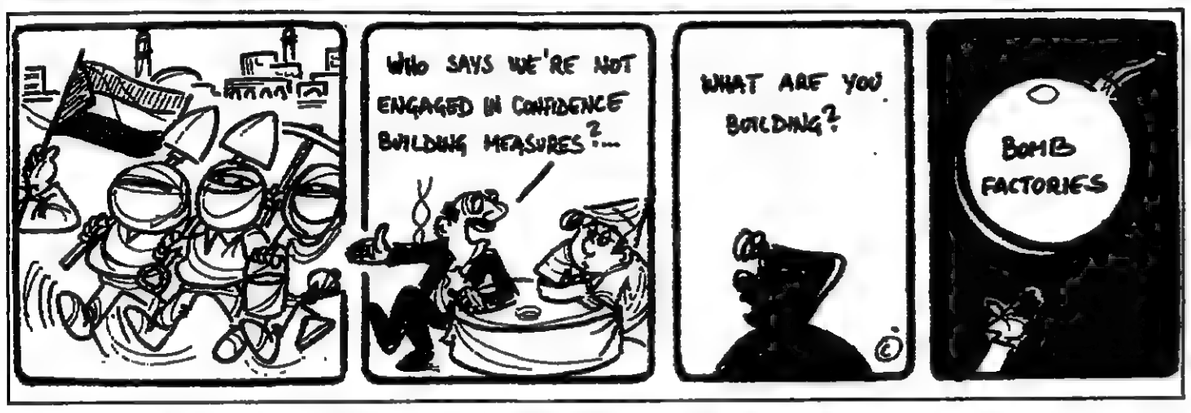


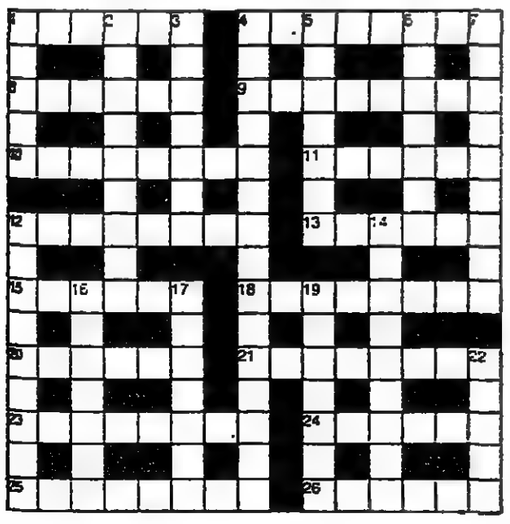
CRYPTIC CROSSWORD

ACROSS

1 Recommend, say, cat fur (6)
4 It's nonsense to applaud, having rejected part (8)
8 One making application to hide old coin (6)
9 Interview concert-goers (8)
10 Correcting essay that's read out (8)
11 Dog is mine—but last two letters went missing (6)
12 Get rebuked as judge comes into court (8)
13 Girl meets boy, with added piquancy (6)
15 A sinful desire of one mind (6)
18 Still under blanket? (8)
20 A rugby competition, even on board ship (6)
21 A call for help to install finest fire-proof material (8)
23 Clumsily cram cheap upholstery material—into this? (8)
24 Times editor removed (6)
25 Harass girl with pressure (8)
26 Provide in flexible fashion! (6)

DOWN

1 In France, you rise as teacher appears (5)
2 Magazine policy to be the last word in humour? (5,4)
3 Changing at junction (7)
4 Agree Cardiff has representation from diplomat (6,9)
5 Drug users' sums one court impounded (7)
6 Curl right round fireplace (7)
7 Inclined earlier to be phoney? (9)
12 Cheap wedding ring for musicians? (5,4)
14 Be quick making appearance with instrument (4,5)
16 Improves appearance of vicar with current measures (7)
17 Infection may make you die full of salt water (7)
19 Badly bit legs and other organs (7)
22 Miserably underhand about notice (5)

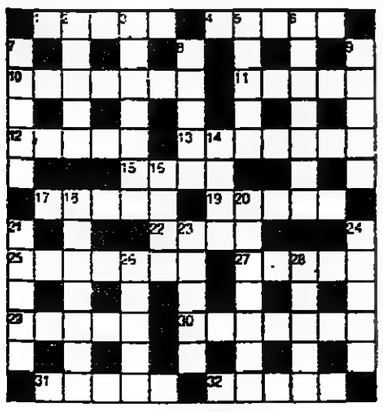


SOLUTIONS

Yesterday's Quick Solution

ACROSS: 1 Cumin, 4 Through, 8 Banquet, 9 Pecan, 10 Rider, 11 Languid, 13 Apex, 15 Temple, 17 Lashed, 20 Ewer, 22 Bizarre, 24 Avail, 26 Acrid, 27 Knavery, 28 Dragoon, 29 Chard.
DOWN: 1 Cabaret, 2 Mined, 3 Neutral, 4 Tattle, 5 Ripen, 6 Uncouth, 7 Hosed, 12 Axle, 14 Peer, 16 Mazurka, 18 Arsenic, 19 Delayed, 21 Weaken, 22 Brand, 23 Radio, 25 Areas.

QUICK CROSSWORD



ACROSS

1 British island (5)
4 Wail (5)
10 Try (7)
11 Kingdom (5)
12 Money-bag (5)
13 Indulgent (7)
15 Waterside plant (4)
17 Damp (5)
19 Verve (5)
22 Above (4)
25 Disgusting (7)
27 Species (5)
29 Outspoken (5)
30 American politician (7)
31 Small fruit (5)
32 Romany (5)

DOWN

2 Bury (5)
3 Hinders (7)
5 Wading bird (5)
6 Closest (7)
7 Glad (5)
8 Purloined (5)
9 Vacant (5)
14 Rim (4)
16 Public school (4)
18 Dim (7)
20 Pressing need (7)
21 Uncertainty (5)
23 Poetry (5)
24 Commit to memory (5)
26 Go in (5)
28 Observes (5)

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Dry Bones

GRAPEVINE By GREER FAY CASHMAN

From basketball court to Burger Ranch: Former star player Aulcie Perry wows young American high schoolers.

"And a new Pharaoh arose in Egypt who did not know Joseph..."

One of the first people to arrive at the President's Residence for the commemorative gathering honoring Chaim Herzog, the nation's sixth president, on the first anniversary of his passing was **Yechiel Kadishai**, Menachem Begin's bureau chief. But a lot of water has passed under the bridge since then, and the new crop of security personnel didn't recognize him.

The rule at the President's Residence is that only super-VIPs are allowed past the reception area more than half an hour before the start of an event. Herzog's former military adjutant **Ami Gluska** was able to get the green light for Kadishai – but there were a couple of security people who didn't recognize Gluska, either.

IT ISN'T the prime minister's fault that his bodyguards are so obsessive about his safety, but it's making life increasingly miserable for everyone else.

Binyamin Netanyahu, one of the speakers to eulogize Herzog, was among the last batch of people to leave the President's Residence. Police held up traffic – including buses – going in the same direction as the PM for almost a quarter of an hour, while traffic flowing in the opposite direction was allowed to pass. Go figure.

The PM and his wife headed for dinner at the nearby Dan Pearl hotel, where the Jerusalem Economic Forum, in conjunction with the Israeli Friends of the Hebrew University, were having a hi-tech-oriented dinner where scientists and potential investors could mingle.

But invited guests weren't permitted to park their cars – or, initially, even enter the hotel!

There were some ugly exchanges, ending up with Economic Forum chairman **Israel Isaacs** having to apologize for something that wasn't his fault.

Chemistry Prof. **Itamar Willner**, one of several academics who described achievements in their fields, said it was a double first for him: He was talking to people who didn't understand anything about chemistry – and he had to confine his address to seven minutes.

No one seemed bored during the some dozen speeches; in fact, the general consensus was that it had been the Forum's most constructive meeting to date.

All's well that ends well?

WHAT is international business tycoon **Ted Arison** going to buy next? Last year he led the investment group that bought Bank Hapoalim. Now, according to a report by *Yediot Aharonot*'s New-York based correspondent **Zadok Yehezkieli**, Arison's Carnival Cruise Line has purchased a 66-percent stake in the *Queen Elizabeth II*, purportedly the world's most expensive luxury liner.

ON completion of his tour of duty here last year, former Australian ambassador **Peter Rogers** promised he would return. It's something many diplomats say, but don't always mean. In Rogers's case, it happened to be true. It seems he left a piece of his heart here – in fact, he was so anxious to return that he quit the foreign service and came back as a free agent. A former journalist who is also familiar with Egypt, Rogers is planning to write a book about the Middle East.

IT looked like a designers' convention when **Gershon Bram** showed his new summer collection this week. The audience included a goodly representation of past and present fashion icons – people like **Rojy Ben Joseph, Rikki Ben-Ari, Sarah Miller, Hava Levy, Tamara Yuval Jones** and **Yuval Caspin**, who brought his camera to catch both the runway scenes and the crowd response.

The good news for women who are tired of having to show their legs beneath skimpy skirts is that nearly all of Bram's hemlines are below the knee. Most are midi, or even maxi.

PRESENTED by her peers with an award for her life's work, **Hanna Meron**, one of Israel's most versatile stage and screen personalities, said her father had always wanted her to be a secretary with the Electric Corporation. She took a shorthand and typing course at Pitman's, but failed to get a job. When she went to the Ohel Theater for consolation, the reaction was, "So act."

AT the Likud's Pessah toast, renegade MK **Benny Begin** was pleasantly surprised at being invited to join the prime minister's table. Fellow MK **Ruby Rivlin** asked why the two Binyamins didn't patch things up between them, and others urged Begin to return to the government ranks. In jovial mood, Begin nevertheless stuck to his principles, especially on the extent of Israel's withdrawal from the territories.

EVERYONE loves burgers. Actress **Aviva Marks** and former top-ranking model **Dana Wexler** attended the Tel Aviv opening of the 34th Israeli link in the Burger King chain, while former basketball star **Aulcie Perry**, who manages one of the Burger Ranch franchises, entertained a group of American high schoolers in Israel under the auspices of the Anti-Defamation League.

THE word is out that Cellcom president **Ya'acov Peri**, a close friend of Betar Jerusalem boss **Moshe Dadash**, is very pleased with the way Betar Jerusalem has acquitted itself. In fact, he's so pleased that he's ready to sign another three-year sponsorship contract with the soccer team.

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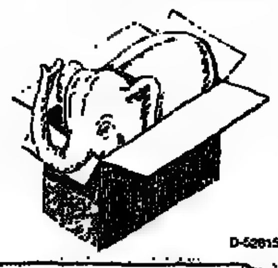

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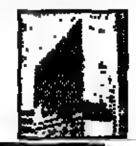

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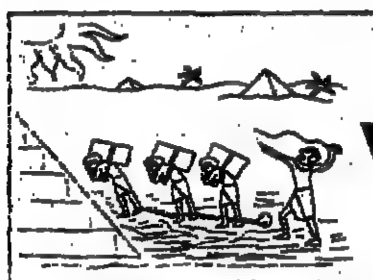

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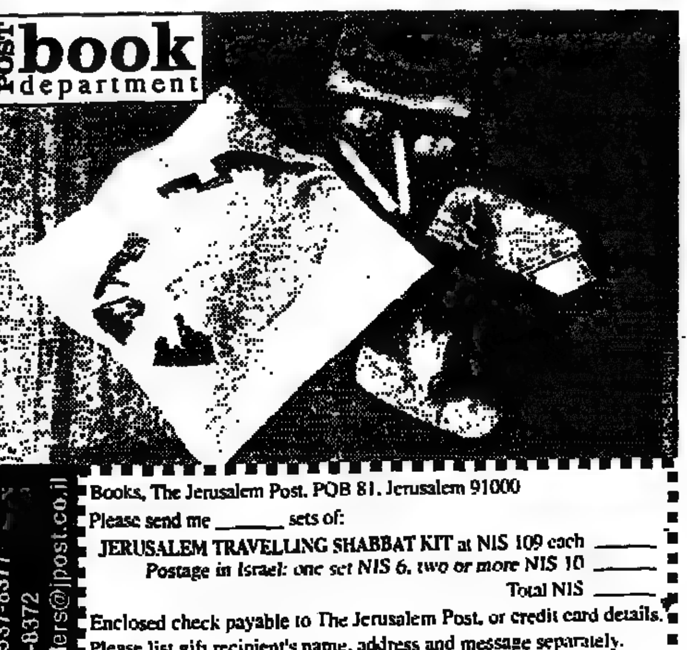

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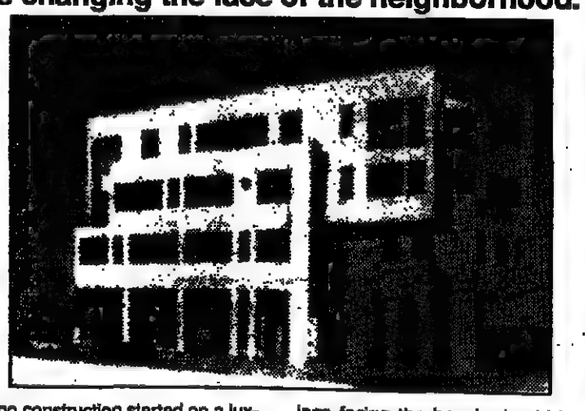

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ART GUIDE
TEL AVIV

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GENERAL ASSISTANCE

GENERAL ASSISTANCE EMERGENCY PHARMACIES

Friday, April 10

Jerusalem: Jaffa Gate, Jaffa Gate, Old City, 628-3898; Balsam, Salah e-Din, 627-2315; Shuafat, Shuafat Road, 581-0108; Dar Aldawa, Herod's Gate, 628-2058.
Tel Aviv: Beni, 174 Dizengoff, 522-2386; Maccabi, 2 Balfour, 629-9856.
Ra'anana-Kfar Sava: Bar Ilan, 29 Bar Ilan, Ra'anana, 744-3579.
Netanya: Hanasi, 36 Weizman, 862-3639.
Haifa: Carmalit, 6 Eliyahu Hanavi, 867-5175.
Krayot area: Kupat Holim Clalit Zevulun, *192 Derech Akko, Kiryat Bialik, 878-7818.*
Herzliya: Clal Pharm, Beit Merkazim, 6 *Maskit (cnr. Sderot Hagalim), Herzliya* Pituah, 955-8472, 955-8407. Open 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Upper Nazareth: Clal Pharm, Lev Ha'ir Mall, 657-0468. Open 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Saturday, April 11

Jerusalem: (day) Kupat Holim Clalit, Straus A, 3 Avigdori, 670-6660; (evening) Shoresh Pharm, 42 Agrippas, 624-6484.; (day and evening) Balsam, Salah e-Din, 627-2315; Shuafat, Shuafat Road, 581-0108; Dar Aldawa, Herod's Gate, 628-*2058.Tel Aviv: (day and evening) Shlomo* Hamelech, 78 Shlomo Hamelech, 524-*8461; Jabotinsky, 125 Ibn Gvirol, 546-*2040. Till midnight: Superpharm Ramat Aviv, *40 Einstein, Ramat Aviv, 641-3730;* Superpharm London Ministore, 4 Shaul *Hamelech, 696-0108.*
Ra'anana-Kfar Sava: (day) Kinneret, 119 *Weizman, Kfar Sava, 767-3228; (evening)* HyperPharm, Hatzomet Mall, Kfar Sava, *743-0592.*
Netanya: Hasharon Mall, Herzl St., 861-7766.
Haifa: Kiryat Eliezer, 6 Mayerhoff Square, 851-1707.
Krayot area: Kupat Holim Clalit Zevulun, 192 Derech Akko, Kiryat Bialik, 878-7818.
Herzliya: Clal Pharm, Beit Merkazim, 6 Maskit (cnr. Sderot Hagalim), Herzliya Pituah, 955-8472, 955-8407. Open 10 a.m. to midnight.

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DUTY HOSPITALS
Friday, April 3

Jerusalem: Hadassah Ein Kerem (internal, orthopedics, pediatrics, ophthalmology); Shaare Zedek (surgery); Bikur Holim (obstetrics, ENT).
Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv Medical Center Dana Pediatric Hospital (pediatrics); *Tel Aviv* Medical Center (internal, surgery).
Netanya: Laniado.

Saturday, April 11
Jerusalem: Hadassah Ein Kerem (internal, orthopedics, obstetrics, ophthalmology); Bikur Holim (ENT, pediatrics); Shaare Zedek (surgery).
Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv Medical Center Dana Pediatric Hospital (pediatrics); Tel Aviv Medical Center (internal, surgery).
Netanya: Laniado.

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Beersheba	* 6274767	Netanya	* 9604444
Beit Shemesh	6523133	P. Tikva	* 9311111
Dan Region	* 5793333	Rehovot	* 9451333
Eilat	* 6332444	Rishon	* 9642333
Haifa	* 8512233	Safed	6920333
Jerusalem	* 6523133	Tel Aviv	* 5460111
Karmiel	* 9985444	Tiberias	* 6792444

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Rape Crisis Center (24 hours), Tel Aviv 523-4819, 544-9191 (men), Jerusalem 625-5558, Haifa 853-0533, Eilat 633-1977.

Crisis Center for Religious Women 02-655-5744/5. 24-hour service, confidentiality guaranteed.

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Government organizes Seders for 13,000 immigrants

By HAIM SHAPIRO and ARYEH DEAN COHEN

Some 13,000 new immigrants are expected to attend Seders organized by the Religious Affairs Ministry, with explanations in Russian and Amharic, the ministry said yesterday.

They will be among the millions of Jews around the world who start the Pessah holiday tonight with a ceremonial meal involving the eating of matza, drinking four cups of wine, and recounting the exodus of the ancient Israelites from Egypt.

Many Jews also observe laws barring the eating of bread and all leavened products, or *hametz* for the duration of the seven-day holiday. *Hametz* is customarily burned before the Seder. According to the Jerusalem Religious Council, one may not eat *hametz* past 10 this morning. (or 9.34 by Sephardi tradition).

Yesterday the chief rabbis went through an annual ritual of selling the state's *hametz* to Hussein Jabber of Abu Ghosh.

Chief IDF Chaplain Gad Navon sold the army's *hametz* to Col. (res.) Nasser Adin Labib, a former officer from the Druse community.

Yesterday some 33,000 Israelis left on flights from Ben-Gurion Airport. El Al reported an increase of about 5 percent in tourists from abroad for the holiday this year in comparison with last year. The increase from North America was 10%, the company noted.

Thousands of Jews in the former Soviet republics will be celebrating Pessah and attending seders, some for the first time, under the sponsorship of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee.

According to a JDC spokesman, the "Pessah Project" launched in partnership with Hillel International, the Schusterman Family Foundation of Tulsa, Oklahoma and the Rudin Foundation will allow tens of thousands of Jews to celebrate the holiday in communal and home settings.

Elderly Jews unable to leave their homes will benefit from Project Elijah, in which students will visit hundreds in Russia, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine – like the prophet Elijah who traditionally visits Jewish homes during the Seder.

The JDC has also opened a Passover web site with information about the holiday for teachers. Based on *The Animated Haggadah* which was produced by the JDC in cooperation with Scopus Films.

The site can be found at www.jdc.org.il/fsu/pesach/html, and offers Russian and English-language text, the spokesman said.

"As the Festival of our Freedom, Pessah has a special meaning for the Jews of the former Soviet Union who chafed for decades under the yoke of the Soviet pharoah," said Asher Ostrin, director of JDC's programs there.

"Now that yoke has been removed, and tens of thousands are yearning to express their Jewishness during this most important holiday. Our task is to give them the tools they're asking for so that they can express their freedom to the fullest... This Pessah, thousands are doing just that."

Judy Siegel adds:

Magen David Adom appealed yesterday for blood donations.

For information, call the toll-free number 1-800-400-101. MDA staffers and volunteers will be on duty throughout the holiday.

For those going on hikes, MDA advises wearing a wide-brimmed hat, appropriate shoes and clothing, and taking along enough to drink. Those who sleep overnight in tents should block the entrance at the ground to prevent scorpions and other pests from getting in.

IRAN

Continued from Page 1

A January 6, 1992 document from somebody identified as Engineer Turkan, chairman of the defense industries, reports that after an "investigation into the subject of the weapons delivered to the Lavizan industries, it has become clear their covers contain a safety mechanism that makes them impossible to use."

Turkan said the only way to make the weapons operational is to "find a way to bring the experts from the country in which they were produced and to remove the covers."

He also expressed dissatisfaction with the level of work of technicians from Argentina employed by the Iranian defense industries. "Turkan called the Argentinians lazy, greedy, and egotistical," the document reads. "He expressed hope that that the group of experts from Russia that arrived in Iran will not cause these problems."

Another document, dated April 3, 1992, is a report to the Revolutionary Guards headquarters saying that a prototype of the Zalzal-300 missile will be ready for test launch that month. "According to these sources," the document says, "the prototype's computer simulation was completed by Iranian industries."

The Israeli government acknowledged receipt of the Iranian governments, but would not vouch for their veracity.

"We are studying the documents," said David Bar-Illan, Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu's communications director. "We're neither confirming nor denying this [the contents of the document]."

In Moscow, Russian Atomic Energy Ministry spokesman Georgy Kaurov dismissed the assertion that nuclear weapons were smuggled from the Soviet Union in the early 1990s.

Hillel Kuttler adds from Washington:

Asked about yesterday's Jerusalem Post story claiming that Iran has acquired nuclear weapons from Kazakhstan, State Department spokesman James Rubin said the US believes this is false. The US looked into the matter in 1992, when reports first surfaced, and concluded "there was no evidence to substantiate such claims," he said.

"While we remain concerned about Iranian intentions to acquire nuclear weapons capability, we have no information suggesting that Iran is in possession of nuclear warheads acquired from the former Soviet republic of Kazakhstan," Rubin said.

"But we do believe Iran is pursuing a nuclear weapons program, and as an organized structure dedicated to acquiring and developing nuclear weapons by seeking the capability to produce both plutonium and highly enriched uranium, which are the critical materials for a nuclear weapon. We are aware of this through a variety of data, including information on Iran's procurement activities that are clearly at variance with a purely peaceful nuclear program," he added.

Blair hopes visit will advance peace process

By JAY BUSHINSKY and DOUGLAS DAVIS

British Prime Minister Tony Blair will arrive on April 19 for a two-day visit with hopes of advancing the peace process in line with Great Britain's current presidency of the European Union.

Government sources expect Blair to avoid the tension that developed during Foreign Secretary Robin Cook's recent visit.

Blair plans to go to the Gaza Strip for talks with Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat, however he has changed his original plan to stay overnight there, preferring to proceed to Tel Aviv instead in order to meet Israeli schoolchildren early the following morning.

He also will tour the projected industrial park at Kami, and hopes to clinch an Israeli-Palestinian deal that will put the park into operation.

Cook's appearance in parliament this week – his first since his visit to Israel – provoked criticism from the Conservative opposition for his conduct and failure to report on his visit to Parliament.

Cook, who has sought to mend fences with Israel, via Ambassador to London Dror Zeigerman, and the Board of Deputies of British Jewry, brushed aside the criticism. He insisted that Blair's reception would not be affected by the controversy surrounding his diplomatic fiasco.

Yesterday a prominent Jewish Labor MP Gerald Kaufman criticized the 200-year-old Board of Deputies for defending "an Israeli government as patently vile as [Prime Minister Binyamin] Netanyahu's."

Kaufman's article in the *New Statesman* weekly was prompted by the board's criticism of Cook and its decision to "postpone" a May dinner at which Cook was to have been guest of honor.

Board president Eldred Tabachnik, a senior barrister and head of the legal firm to which Blair belonged, characterized Kaufman's outburst as "the reaction of a very foolish and embittered man."

Hillel Kuttler adds from Washington:

State Department spokesman James Rubin said yesterday that US envoy Dennis Ross had briefed EU leaders on the peace process.

Rubin said that the Ross' meeting yesterday with Netanyahu's adviser Yitzhak Molcho was "not a particularly significant meeting," although he added, to some chuckling by reporters: "every time we meet with the Israelis on the Middle East peace process there is some level of significance."

2 for 1: 'Post' handicrafts fair and museum

Little did I imagine 12 years ago when we organized our first Handicrafts Fair in a Jerusalem hotel, that it would develop into such a successful and anticipated event. This year, thanks to the hospitality of the Bible Lands Museum, we are back in Jerusalem.

Within hours of announcing the date on which the Pessah Fair would take place, we were inundated with requests from all over the country for stalls. Our job is to select the best ceramists, jewelers and artists working in silk, batik, wood, metal, and leather. The 80 stands will be carrying some of the best items that we have ever shown.

And there's an extra advantage this year that we have never had before. Admission to the fair includes admission to the museum with its wonderful collection of archeological artifacts, including a new exhibition of the Seven Species of the Land of Israel.

While touring the fair, you can leave your kids at various workshops being organized by the museum, the show being put on by Max the Magician, or – for the younger ones – at the jumping castle trampoline.

The Handicrafts Fair will be open from noon to 7 p.m. on Tuesday, April 14th. We will be raffling off a free air ticket to London.

I wish you all a happy and kosher Passover and look forward to seeing you all on the day of the fair.

Don't forget, all three Funds need your year-round support. Send your checks today to: The Jerusalem Post Funds, P. O. Box 81, Jerusalem 91000.

Donors living in the United States wishing to receive tax benefits, can send their donations to: Friends of The Jerusalem Post Funds, 270 Lafayette St., Suite 505, New York, NY 10012. Please designate in your letter to which fund you wish to donate.

FUNDS

by BEVERLEE BLACK

FORSAKE ME NOT

NIS 500 Anon., Haifa.
NIS 400 Ph. Glaser, Saled.
NIS 300 Anon., Petah Tikva.
NIS 200 Eduard and Betty Wolfe, Kfar Sava.
NIS 150 In loving memory of our parents - Ruth and Chanan Nijk, Ramat Gan.
NIS 100 Rachel and Kurt Bruckner, J'lm. In memory of all my loved ones - Rosa Shaw, Herzliya. Judy Petel, J'lm. Lili Kovec, Ramat Gan.
NIS 60 In memory of my husband, Philip Hurwitz, my mother, Bertha Barash and my son in law, Yisrael Ellman - Fania Hurwitz, Kibbutz Yasur.
NIS 58 In loving memory of my beloved husband, Sam z"l, on our 58th wedding anniversary - Cynthia Tisser, Netanya.
NIS 50 Fany Isaacs, Beit Itzhak. Marina Shamesh, J'lm.
NIS 36 Eva Toran, Tel Aviv.
$120 In honor of the birthday of my dear wife, Shirley - Irving Berger, Berkeley, CA.
$100 Theodor Shnitka, Edmonton, Canada.
$50 In memory of beloved uncle Ervi (Ush) Teichman's yahrzeit, 29th Iyar - Stuart Kratter, Suffern, NY.
$36 Mazal Tov on your 88th Pessah birthday, keep them coming hale and hearty - Pauline Waronker, J'lm.
$35 Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence Layfer, Wilmette, IL.
$25 Minnie Cooper, Shreveport, LA.
$18 On the occasion of my mother's yahrzeit on March 29th - Irving Sonenshine, Charleston, SC.
$15 Isaac and Ruth Samson, Netanya.

New Progress	Donations Total
NIS 2,204	NIS 86,070.87
$399	$25,844.25

TOY FUND

NIS 450 In memory of Pop Art and Papa Sam and in honor of Noam going to the army - Ben Shalom, Chevel Eilot.
NIS 400 Ph. Glaser, Saled.
NIS 200 Eduard and Betty Wolfe, Kfar Saba.
$50 In loving memory of Mollie and Moses Markowitz on their yahrzeit during Passover - Regina Mazor and Marilyn Masir, Skokie IL.
$26 Addas Israel Congregation, Washington, DC.
$15 Isaac and Ruth Samson, Netanya.

New Progress	Donations Totals
NIS 1,050	NIS 78,279.88
$91	$20,806.92

WELCOME HOME FUND

NIS 308 B'nai B'rith, Albert Einstein Lodge, J'lm.
NIS 200 Eduard and Betty Wolfe, Kfar Saba.
$50 Anon., Springfield, GA. In honor of my son in law, David Bruck's birthday, for his gift - Anita Starr, Dorset, VT.
$25 Minnie Cooper, Shreveport, LA.

New Progress	Donations Total
NIS 500	NIS 16,546.7
$125	$8,628.01

Tender for Purchase of Property

1. Offers are invited to purchase the house and land (including a tennis-court) at 16 Hama'apalim St., Herzliya Pituah.
2. Written offers should be delivered to the undersigned at Yigal Amon & Co., 3 Daniel Frisch St., Tel Aviv, no later than May 21, 1998.
3. The undersigned bear no responsibility for the house's condition and each bidder will be responsible for examining the physical condition of the house and the planning rights of the property.
4. The successful bidder shall bear the cost of registering the rights in his name, as well as all taxes, fees and levies relating to the sale and/or to the property.
5. The undersigned do not undertake to accept the highest or any offer whatsoever and reserve the right to negotiate with any of the bidders and/or any other parties, and/or to conduct a competition between the bidders and/or other parties and/or to cancel the sales procedure at any time.
6. The house may be viewed by calling Linda, Tel. 050-286887 (not Shabbat).

David Osborne, Advocate
Yigal Amon & Co.
and Zeev Vitale
Administrators of the Estate of the late Felix Gordon

هكذا من الأصل

Curtis home run powers Yankees past Seattle

SEATTLE (AP) — Chad Curtis hit a two-run homer in the eighth inning Wednesday to give the New York Yankees a 4-3 victory over the Seattle Mariners in Hideki Irabu's first start of the season.

Curtis homered 410 feet over the center-field fence off Bobby Ayala (0-1) after Ayala walked pinch-hitter Tim Raines to lead off the inning, giving New York a 4-2 lead.

Graeme Lloyd (1-0), the third Yankees pitcher, pitched one-third of an inning for the win. Irabu went five innings, giving up one run on four hits and two walks.

Mike Stanton gave up one run in 1 1-3 innings for the Yankees' first save of the season.

Russ Davis hit two solo homers for Seattle.

Athletics 3, Indians 1
Indians 6, Athletics 5

In Oakland, California, Kenny Rogers pitched seven strong innings and A.J. Hinch singled home the go-ahead run in the seventh for Oakland in the second game.

Rogers (1-0), obtained in a trade from the Yankees last November, got his first win for Oakland just a few hours after the Indians completed a 6-5 victory over the A's in a game that started Monday night.

It took the Indians just 20 minutes to complete their win in the suspended game, a contest that was delayed hours by rain on Monday night and then suspended because of the AL curfew.

In the scheduled game, Rogers allowed one run and four hits — only one after the first inning. The left-hander struck out five and walked four. Bill Taylor pitched the ninth for his first save.

Dave Burba (1-1) took the loss.

Cincinnati's Gabe White in action against San Diego on Wednesday. (Reuters)

NATIONAL LEAGUE

Padres 6, Reds 3

In San Diego, Andy Ashby won his first game in nine career decisions against Cincinnati and Greg Vaughn and Wally Joyner homered.

Ashby (1-1) didn't allow a hit until a leadoff single by Bret Boone in the sixth inning. He gave up five hits and three runs in 6 2-3 innings, striking out seven and walking two.

Gabe White (0-1), starting for the injured Steve Cooke, allowed four runs and nine hits in five innings.

Trevor Hoffman, who escaped a bases-loaded jam in the eighth, got the final four outs for his second save.

Pirates 5, Braves 3

In Pittsburgh, Jason Kendall homered and went 3-for-3 off former batterymate Denny Neagle to support another good early-season start by Esteban Loaiza.

National League

East Division	W	L	Pct.	GB
New York	5	2	.714	—
Atlanta	4	3	.571	1
Philadelphia	4	3	.571	1
Florida	1	6	.111	5
Montreal	0	7	.000	5
Central Division				
Milwaukee	6	1	.857	—
Chicago	6	2	.750	½
St. Louis	5	2	.714	1
Houston	5	4	.556	2
Pittsburgh	4	4	.500	2½
Cincinnati	3	5	.375	3½
West Division				
San Diego	6	2	.750	—
San Francisco	5	3	.625	1
Colorado	4	5	.444	2½
Los Angeles	2	5	.286	3½
Arizona	2	6	.250	4

American League

East Division	W	L	Pct.	GB
Baltimore	6	1	.857	—
Tampa Bay	4	3	.571	2
New York	3	4	.429	3
Toronto	3	4	.429	3
Boston	3	5	.375	3½
Central Division				
Cleveland	6	1	.857	—
Chicago	3	3	.500	2½
Kansas City	3	4	.429	3
Minnesota	3	4	.429	3
Detroit	2	5	.286	4
West Division				
Anaheim	5	3	.625	—
Texas	3	3	.500	1
Seattle	3	5	.375	2
Oakland	2	4	.333	2

AMERICAN LEAGUE

Cleveland 020 211 000—8 7 1
Oakland 200 002 010—5 14 3
(completion of suspended game)
Jr.Wright, Krivda (5), Morman (7), Plunk (8), Assenmacher (8), M.Jackson (9) and Borders; Candiotti, Small (5), Dougherty (8) and Hinch. W—Krivda, 1-0. L—Candiotti, 0-2. Sv—M.Jackson (4). HRs—Cleveland, Justice (2). Oakland, Giambi (2).

Cleveland 000 001 000—1 4 1
Oakland 100 000 11x—3 8 0
Bones, Assenmacher (8) and Borders; Rogers, Mohler (8), Taylor (9) and Hinch. W—Rogers, 1-0. L—Burba, 1-1. Sv—Taylor (1).

New York 000 010 120—4 10 0
Seattle 000 100 101—3 10 0
Irabu, Buddie (6), Lloyd (7), Nelson (8), Stanton (8) and Posada; Cloude, Fossas (7), Ayala (8), Timlin (8), Spoltoric (8) and D.Wilson, Mazzano (9). W—Lloyd 1-0. L—Ayala 0-1. Sv—Stanton (1). HRs—New York, Curtis (2). Seattle, R.Davis 2 (2).

Toronto 410 002 020—9 11 1
Minnesota 030 003 000—6 10 4
Henigen, Plesac (6), Quantrill (7), Ra.Myers (8) and Fletcher; Hawkins, Trombley (4), Swindell (5), F.Rodriguez (8), Carrasco (9), Guardado (9), Aguilera (9) and Steinbach. W—Henigen 1-0. L—Hawkins 0-1. Sv—Ra.Myers (2). HR—Toronto, S.Green (3).

Boston 000 100 000—1 8 0
Anaheim 000 002 00x—2 5 0
Lowe, Corsi (7), Eckersley (8), Avery (8) and Hatteberg; McDowell, Holtz (9), Percival (9) and Walbeck. W—McDowell 1-1. L—Lowe 0-2. Sv—Percival (2). HR—Boston, Jn.Valentin (1).

NATIONAL LEAGUE

Atlanta 010 000 002—3 7 0
Pittsburgh 002 120 00x—5 8 1
Neagle, Edmondson (8) and J.Lopez; Loaiza, Christiansen (8), Loiselle (9) and Kendall. W—Loaiza, 1-0. L—Neagle, 1-1. Sv—Loiselle (3). HRs—Atlanta, Galarraga 2 (3). Pittsburgh, Kendall (1), J.Guillen (2).

Florida 000 012 200—5 7 3
Philadelphia 010 125 00x—8 14 0
Ludwick, Ojeda (4), Henriquez (6), Darensbourg (6) and Zaun; M.Grace, Winston (6), Spradlin (7), M.Leiter (8) and Lieberthal. W—M.Grace, 1-1. L—Ludwick, 0-2. HR—Florida, D.Lee (2).

St. Louis 125 010 210—13 14 1
Colorado 100 124 010—8 13 2
Aybar, Acevedo (6), Petkovsek (6), Painter (9) and Lampkin; Jm.Wright, B.M.Jones (3), DeJean (6), Veres (7), Munoz (9) and J.Reed. W—Aybar 1-1. L—Jm.Wright 0-2. HR—St. Louis, R.Lankford (1).

Arizona 100 200 000—3 5 0
Los Angeles 000 000 000—0 8 1
Bn.Anderson, F.Rodriguez (9) and Fabregas; Nomo, Guthrie (6), Dreifort (7), R.Lankford (9) and Piazza. W—Bn.Anderson 1-1. L—Nomo 0-1. Sv—F.Rodriguez (2). HRs—Arizona, Fabregas (1), Brade (1).

Houston 004 000 200—6 12 1
San Francisco 200 000 100—3 10 0
Lima, T.Miller (7), Scanlan (7), D.Henry (8), B.Wagner (9) and Ausmus; Rueter, S.Reed (7), Ortiz (8), Poole (8), Johnstone (9) and B.Johnson. W—Lima 2-0. L—Rueter 1-1. Sv—B.Wagner (2). HRs—Houston, De.Bell (2), Berry (2).

Cincinnati 000 001 200—3 6 1
San Diego 300 100 11x—6 13 0
G.White, Sullivan (6), R.Jordan (6), Belinda (7) and Taubensee; Ashby, Hitchcock (7), Boehringer (8), Hoffman (8) and C.Hernandez, G.Myers (8). W—Ashby 1-1. L—G.White 0-1. Sv—Hoffman (2). HRs—San Diego, G.Vaughn (1), Joyner (2).

Sabres down Hurricanes; Islanders edge Devils

BUFFALO (AP) – Jason Woolley and Geoff Sanderson each scored goals and Dominik Hasek stopped 15 shots as the Buffalo Sabres defeated Carolina 3-1 Wednesday night and slowed the Hurricanes' playoff drive.

The Sabres moved into a tie with Montreal and Boston for fifth place in the Eastern Conference playoff race, each with 83 points. The Hurricanes failed in their bid to tie idle Ottawa for the eighth and final playoff spot in the conference.

The Sabres' victory came in the wake of a front-office shakeup in which Larry Quinn was fired as president and chief executive officer. New owner John Rigas, who bought the team in December, named his son Timothy Rigas as CEO and Ron Bertovich interim general manager of administration.

Islanders 3, Devils 2

In Uniondale, New York, Robert Reichel's power-play goal with 23.2 seconds left in regulation led the New York Islanders over the New Jersey Devils.

The win extended the Islanders' winning streak to four games, their longest of the season. It was also the first time the Islanders won a game when trailing after two periods since Dec. 26, 1996 against the Devils.

Flyers 6, Lightning 1

In Tampa, Florida, John LeClair scored two goals, including a controversial game-winner with 12:11 left, as the Philadelphia Flyers scored five straight third-period goals to beat the Tampa Bay Lightning.

LeClair was moving down the slot when Chris Gratton's centering pass appeared to hit the left wing's skate. The goal was upheld following a video review.

Stars 2, Capitals 1, OT

In Dallas, Jamie Langenbrunner's goal with 1:32 left in overtime lifted the Dallas Stars over Washington, ending the Capitals' five-game unbeaten streak.

The Capitals had tied it with 5:54 left in regulation on Andrei Nikolishin's fourth goal.

Mighty Ducks 4, Oilers 2

In Anaheim, California, Steve Rucchin scored midway through the third period as the Mighty Ducks of Anaheim defeated Edmonton, slowing the Oilers' race for a playoff position.

The loss denied the Oilers the chance to move into a tie for sixth place in the Western Conference.

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
x-New Jersey	46	22	9	101	210	152
x-Philadelphia	40	25	11	91	226	178
Washington	36	29	12	84	206	192
N.Y. Islanders	28	38	10	66	200	211
N.Y. Rangers	23	37	18	64	188	228
Florida	23	41	12	58	185	234
Tampa Bay	17	51	9	43	145	250
Northeast Division						
x-Pittsburgh	37	23	17	91	210	177
Montreal	36	30	11	83	224	194
Boston	35	28	13	83	202	180
Buffalo	34	27	15	83	195	171
Ottawa	30	32	14	74	177	188
Carolina	32	36	8	72	187	199

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Central Division	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
x-Dallas	45	21	11	101	225	150
x-Detroit	42	28	15	99	235	184
x-St. Louis	41	27	8	90	230	184
Phoenix	31	33	12	74	208	210
Chicago	30	35	12	72	185	187
Toronto	27	41	9	63	179	224
Pacific Division						
x-Colorado	37	25	16	90	218	195
Los Angeles	35	30	11	81	213	205
San Jose	32	37	8	72	196	205
Edmonton	31	37	10	72	197	214
Calgary	25	37	14	64	200	228
Anaheim	25	40	12	62	191	243
Vancouver	24	40	13	61	214	261

x-clinched playoff berth

Carolina 0 0 1—1
Buffalo 1 2 0—3
First Period—1, Buffalo, Woolley 9 (Peca, Brown), 18:32 (pp). Second Period—2, Buffalo, Sanderson 11 (Zalnik, Barnaby), 17:55. Third Period—3, Carolina, Sheppard 17 (Halko, Galinas), 18:35. 4, Buffalo, Varada 4 (Ward), 19:02 (en). Goalies—Carolina, Kidd. Buffalo, Hasek. A—16,644

New Jersey 1 1 0—2
N.Y. Islanders 1 1 1—3
First Period—1, New Jersey, Morrison 3 (Elias, Andreychuk), 9:37. 2, New York, Palffy 40, 15:05. Second Period—3, New Jersey, Andreychuk 13 (Elias, Stevens), 7:3—16. Goalies—Philadelphia, Burke. Tampa Bay, Fitzpatrick. A—14,280

Washington 0 0 1 0—1
Dallas 0 1 0 1—2
First Period—None. Second Period—1, Dallas, Skrudland 6 (Blassen), 4:26. Third Period—2, Washington, Nikolishin 4 (Bondra), 14:08. Overtime—3, Dallas, Langenbrunner 22 (Lehtinen), 3:28. Goalies—Washington, Kolzig. Dallas, Belfour. A—16,517

Edmonton 2 0 0—2
Anaheim 1 1 2—4
First Period—1, Edmonton, Smyth 19 (Guerin, Hamrlik), 2:16 (pp). 2, Edmonton, Fraser 9 (McAmmond, Niinimaa), 5:24 (pp). 3, Anaheim, Sandstrom 9 (Karpa, Stevenson), 10:18. Second Period—4, Anaheim, Marha 6, 14:21. Third Period—5, Anaheim, Rucchin 17 (Marha, Bannister), 11:01. 6, Anaheim, Selanne 52 (Rucchin), 19:53 (sh-en). Anaheim 10-8-6—24. Goalies—Edmonton, Joseph. Anaheim, Shtalenkov. A—17,154.

NBA

Continued from Page 24

Bucks 107, Raptors 100

In Toronto, Ray Allen scored 25 points and Elliot Perry had 14 of his 20 points in the fourth quarter as the Milwaukee Bucks handed the Toronto Raptors their 11th straight loss.

Toronto tied a franchise record with its 61st loss of the year before 14,168 fans, the smallest crowd of the season at SkyDome.

Gary Trent led the Raptors with 24 points.

76ers 109, Hornets 101

In Philadelphia, Allen Iverson had 30 points, a career-high 10 rebounds and six assists to lead the Philadelphia 76ers over the Charlotte Hornets.

Derrick Coleman had 25 points and nine rebounds for the 76ers, who have won four of their last five games.

The Hornets, who lost their fifth straight road game, got 19 points each from Glen Rice and David Wesley.

Magic 95, Pistons 87

In Orlando, Florida, Nick Anderson had 26 points and Derek Strong came off the bench to score 20 as the Orlando Magic kept their fading playoff hopes alive.

The Magic trail New Jersey by 1 1/2 games for the eighth and final playoff spot in the Eastern Conference. The Nets play a more favorable schedule down the stretch than Orlando, which plays four of its last five games on the road.

Detroit lost its seventh straight game and was mathematically eliminated from playoff contention. Grant Hill was held without a field goal for the last three quarters, finishing with 15 points on 5-for-13 shooting.

Lakers 113, Grizzlies 102

In Inglewood, California, Shaquille O'Neal scored 30 points and Eddie Jones added 26 as the Los Angeles Lakers stayed perfect against the Vancouver Grizzlies with their 11th consecutive win in the three-year-old series.

The Lakers gained a half-game on idle Seattle for the No. 2 seed in the Western Conference playoff race with their sixth straight victory.

Shareef Abdur-Rahim led Vancouver with 26 points and Blue Edwards had 20. Grizzlies center Bryant Reeves sprained his right knee and did not return after halftime. He had six points and seven rebounds in 21 minutes.

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division	W	L	Pct.	GB
x-Miami	53	24	.688	—
New York	42	36	.538	11½
New Jersey	40	36	.526	12½
Orlando	39	38	.506	14
Washington	38	38	.500	14½
Boston	34	42	.447	18½
Philadelphia	30	47	.390	23
Central Division				
y-Chicago	59	17	.776	—
y-Indiana	53	23	.697	6
y-Charlotte	47	29	.618	12
y-Atlanta	45	30	.600	13½
Cleveland	43	33	.566	16
Milwaukee	35	42	.455	24½
Detroit	34	43	.442	25½
Toronto	15	61	.197	44

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Midwest Division	W	L	Pct.	GB
x-Utah	58	18	.763	—
y-San Antonio	52	25	.675	6½
y-Minnesota	40	36	.526	18
y-Houston	38	38	.500	20
Dallas	19	58	.247	39½
Vancouver	17	59	.224	41
Denver	9	67	.118	49
Pacific Division				
y-Seattle	57	19	.750	—
y-L.A. Lakers	56	20	.737	1
y-Phoenix	51	25	.671	6
y-Portland	43	33	.566	14
Sacramento	27	49	.355	30
Golden State	16	60	.211	41
L.A. Clippers	16	60	.211	41

x-clinched division title y-clinched playoff berth

Charlotte 24 12 29 36—101
Philadelphia 31 28 21 29—109
CHARLOTTE (101) Rice 8-18 2-3 19, Mason 4-6 7-7 15, Geiger 5-12 3-4 13, Phills 3-9 0-1 6, Wesley 8-11 3-4 19, Dieaz 3-6 0-2 6, Curry 0-2 2-2 2, Royal 0-2 0-0 0, Maxwell 0-1 4-4 4, Reid 4-7 0-0 8, Armstrong 3-6 2-2 9. Totals 36-79 23-29 101.
PHILADELPHIA (109) Thomas 1-5 4-4 6, Coleman 9-18 7-8 25, Ratliff 5-10 0-0 10, McKie 4-5 1-3 10, Iverson 8-18 11-12 30, Davis 0-0 7-8 7, Snow 2-3 2-2 6, Williams 1-3 3-4 5, Smith 5-10 0-0 10, Parker 0-1 0-2 0. Totals 36-73 35-44 109.
Fouled out—Wesley. Rebounds—Charlotte 44 (Dieaz 8), Philadelphia 49 (Iverson 10). Assists—Charlotte 25 (Wesley 9), Philadelphia 27 (Snow 9). Technicals—Mason, Reid, Ratliff. Ejections—Reid, Ratliff. A—19,535.

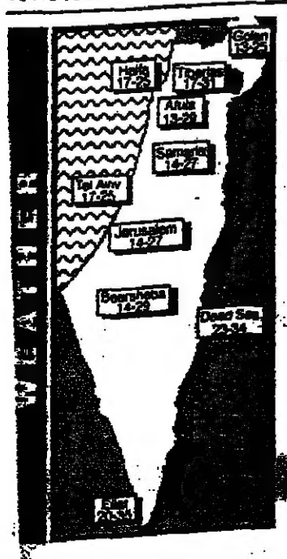
Detroit 20 19 23 15—97
Orlando 24 23 26 22—95
DETROIT (87) Hill 5-13 5-7 15, Reid 8-15 0-0 16, B.Williams 2-8 2-2 7, Dumars 5-16 5-8 17, Hunter 8-11 4-4 20, Stackhouse 2-10 1-1 6, Pollard 0-0 0-0 0, J.Williams 0-1 0-0 0, Seely 1-1 0-0 2, Mahorn 2-6 0-0 4. Totals 34-81 15-17 87.
ORLANDO (95) Outlaw 3-6 0-0 6, Grant 5-10 0-0 10, Schayes 2-5 0-0 4, Anderson 8-20 6-8 26, Price 7-15 2-3 18, Strong 8-13 2-2 20, Ollie 2-5 0-2 4, Wilkins 0-2 0-0 0, Benoit 3-7 0-0 7. Totals 39-82 10-15 95.
Fouled out—Reid, Rebounds—Detroit 45 (Reid 15), Orlando 52 (Strong 10). Assists—Detroit 21 (Hill 5), Orlando 24 (Outlaw, Anderson, Price, Ollie 5). Total fouls—Detroit 18, Orlando 17. Technicals—Pistons illegal defense, Orlando coach Daly. A—17,248.

Miami 17 16 31 16—80
New York 19 25 24 15—83
MIAMI (80) Majerle 1-5 0-0 2, Brown 5-8 1-2 11, Mourning 8-17 6-13 26, Lenard 3-9 2-2 9, Hardaway 6-22 3-4 16, Askins 3-5 0-0 9, Murdock 0-3 3-4 3, Strickland 2-5 0-0 4, Conlon 0-0 0-0 0. Totals 29-72 17-25 80.
NEW YORK (83) Mills 2-10 1-1 5, Johnson 1-6 8-8 10, Oakley 7-13 0-0 14, Houston 11-21 8-10 29, Ward 1-4 0-0 3, Cummings 1-7 0-0 2, Starks 2-10 2-2 7, Childs 4-8 5-6 13, H.Williams 0-0 0-0 0. Totals 29-79 22-26 83.
Fouled out—Askins. Rebounds—Miami 46 (Brown 12), New York 59 (Oakley 13). Assists—Miami 24 (Hardaway 11), New York 21 (Houston, Ward 4). A—19,763.

San Antonio 23 20 18 27—88
Utah 20 28 21 29—98
SAN ANTONIO (88) Duncan 14-25 6-8 34, Robinson 0-2 0-0 0, Perdue 2-2 2-2 6, Del Negro 3-9 1-2 7, Jackson 4-9 0-0 11, Gray 4-8 4-4 13, Lohaus 3-8 0-0 9, Herrera 3-6 0-0 6, Williams 0-1 2-4 2, Rose 0-0 0-0 0. Totals 33-69 15-20 88.
UTAH (98) Keefe 2-6 1-2 5, Malone 10-21 12-16 32, Foster 2-5 0-0 4, Homacek 3-8 9-9 16, Stockton 7-11 3-3 17, Eisley 2-3 2-2 6, Ostertag 1-3 1-2 3, Russell 2-3 4-4 9, Anderson 1-2 0-0 2, Morris 1-4 2-2 5. Totals 31-66 34-40 98.
Fouled out—None. Rebounds—San Antonio 30 (Duncan 7), Utah 52 (Malone 10). Assists—San Antonio 20 (Jackson 8), Utah 17 (Stockton 9). Technicals—Utah coach Sloan, Malone. Flagrant foul—Perdue, Malone. A—19,911.

Vancouver 28 24 24 26—102
L.A. Lakers 25 33 29 26—113
VANCOUVER (102) Abdur-Rahim 9-23 8-9 26, Smith 2-6 3-3 7, Reeves 3-11 0-0 6, Edwards 8-11 3-5 20, Mayberry 2-5 0-0 5, Daniels 3-5 0-0 6, Massenburg 4-8 5-8 13, Lynch 4-7 0-1 8, Hurley 3-6 0-0 6, Chilcutt 0-0 0-0 0, Newbill 1-2 2-2 5, Robinson 0-3 0-0 0. Totals 39-88 21-28 102.
L.A. LAKERS (113) Bennett 5-9 2-6 12, Fox 3-8 3-3 9, O'Neal 13-18 4-10 30, Jones 10-16 1-2 26, Fisher 2-6 2-4 7, Van Exel 2-7 0-0 4, Bryant 4-10 5-8 14, Campbell 2-6 1-3 5, Blount 2-4 2-3 6, Barry 0-2 0-0 0. Totals 43-88 21-40 113.
*Fouled out—None. Rebounds—Vancouver 56 (Massenburg 10), Los Angeles 64 (Blount 15). Assists—Vancouver 24 (Edwards 6), Los Angeles 31 (Van Exel 8). A—17,505.

AROUND THE WORLD



	Low C	Low F	High C	High F	
Amsterdam	08	46	12	54	cloudy
Beijing	12	54	20	68	cloudy
Berlin	06	43	10	50	cloudy
Boston	06	43	12	54	rain
Buenos Aires	14	57	21	70	cloudy
Cairo	14	57	30	86	clear
Chicago	06	43	11	52	rain
Copenhagen	01	34	06	43	cloudy
Frankfurt	04	39	14	57	cloudy
Geneva	05	41	12	54	pldcloudy
Helsinki	-07	19	03	37	clear
Hong Kong	26	79	28	82	clear
Jo'burg	14	57	20	68	cloudy
Lisbon	10	50	16	61	cloudy
London	07	45	11	52	cloudy
Los Angeles	12	54	18	64	clear
Madrid	08	46	13	55	pldcloudy
Montreal	01	34	14	57	clear
Moscow	03	37	10	50	cloudy
New York	08	46	16	61	rain
Nice	09	48	15	59	cloudy
Paris	04	39	11	52	rain
Prague	08	46	16	61	pldcloudy
Rio de Janeiro	23	73	29	84	cloudy
Rome	08	46	17	63	cloudy
San Paulo	11	52	15	59	rain
Stockholm	-07	19	08	46	clear
Sydney	21	70	22	72	pldcloudy
Tokyo	08	46	12	54	rain
Toronto	06	43	10	50	cloudy
Vienna	05	41	16	61	pldcloudy
Warsaw	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	52	cloudy
Washington	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	77	rain
Zurich	01	34	12	54	pldcloudy

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SPORTS in brief

Lambert, Lara take Windies to victory

PORT OF SPAIN, Trinidad (Reuters) – Opener Clayton Lambert and captain Brian Lara powered West Indies to a 57-run win in the final one-day international against England on Wednesday with a record partnership.

Lambert, named man of the match, hit 119 and Lara 93 as they put on 185 together, the highest one-day third wicket partnership for West Indies.

It took West Indies to 302 for five in their 50 overs, a total England never really threatened despite another aggressive innings from opener Nick Knight who top scored for the visitors with 65.

England were bowled out for 245 with only Mark Ramprakash showing any defiance with 51 as the rest of the top order folded.

Even a last wicket stand of 44 by the unlikely combination of Angus Fraser (30) and Robert Croft (13 not out) never seriously threatened West Indies domination.

Celtic move clear in Scottish premier league

GLASGOW (Reuters) – Celtic regained their momentum with a 2-1 win at Kilmarnock which took them three points clear at the top of the Scottish premier division on Wednesday.

Hearts stumbled at home in the three-way title race when a late equaliser by Motherwell's Tommy Coyne ensured a 1-1 draw which stopped the Edinburgh club from moving back into second place ahead of title-holders Rangers.

Two draws in their last three league matches and a painful Scottish Cup semifinal defeat by Rangers last Sunday had raised doubts about Celtic's nerve in their chase for their first league title in 10 years.

However, a wonderful goal from Henrik Larsson in the 22nd minute boosted the confidence of Wim Jansen's team.

Kilmarnock, bidding for a UEFA Cup place, equalized in the 40th minute when Alex Burke pounced to score from an acute angle. But Celtic grabbed the winner in the 56th minute when Darren Jackson put Simon Donnelly clear and the young striker chipped over the stranded Marshall for his 13th goal of the season.

Milan take first leg lead in Cup final

MILAN (Reuters) – Liberian George Weah scored a bizarre last minute goal to give AC Milan a 1-0 victory over Lazio in the first leg of the Italian Cup final on Wednesday.

Milan goalkeeper Sebastiano Rossi punted a huge drop kick up field, the ball bounced once and Weah, surging towards the edge of the penalty area, headed the ball over Lazio keeper Luca Marchegiani directly into the net.

Lazio besieged the Milan goal for four minutes of extra time but failed to find an equaliser to take back to Rome for the second leg on April 29.

Until Weah's goal, the Rome side had had the better of a largely disappointing match at the San Siro stadium which was marred by minor clashes between visiting fans and police in the stands at halftime.

Three snooker players fail random drug tests

LONDON (Reuters) – Three snooker players have failed random drug tests, the sport's governing body said yesterday.

The World Professional Billiards and Snooker Association (WPBSA) said it would neither name the players nor the circumstances before the players had had a chance "to put their case."

The players will be heard by a WPBSA disciplinary committee on April 14.

Marty Blake, the WPBSA'S company secretary, said: "Snooker was the first professional sport to introduce an official drugs testing policy in April 1985 and our procedures are both thorough and fair."

Capital celebrates derby day

By ORI LEWIS

Jerusalem has been abuzz over the past week as the derby, the weekend's central soccer fixture, has neared.

Teddy Stadium is expected to be overflowing tomorrow afternoon as some 15,000 fans will watch leaders Betar host Hapoel, whose morale has been boosted by a berth in the semi-finals of the State Cup.

All talk in the capital is that both clubs should take the main domestic honors this season. But whether that happens is still far from certain.

Betar may be without Hungarian ace midfielder Stefan Salloi, who is ill, while Hapoel, with international defender Motti Ohayon suspended, will miss mainstay Michel Dayan even more.

The veteran midfielder has had his career ended by an eye injury. Dayan will be on the sidelines, but his important presence on the pitch might be extremely lacking as the side in red and black tries to challenge the yellow and blacks, who appear to be invincible at the moment.

Betar are the league leaders only on goal difference from Hapoel. They are plus-33 compared to Hapoel's plus-19.

Hapoel face a true test of strength at Kiryat Eliezer tomorrow afternoon when they take on third-placed Hapoel Haifa.

Any mishap for the Tel Avivians, and with only four rounds of action to go after tomorrow, they will find it almost impossible to wrest the championship from Betar.

An interesting tussle takes place at the bottom of the table. In what has been dubbed the "derby of the South," Hapoel Beersheba host bottom placed Hapoel Ashkelon.

A win for Beersheba will almost certainly ensure Beersheba's survival in the National League, while Ashkelon will be all but certain of returning to the second division.

This weekend's National League action.
Hapoel Kfar Sava v. Hapoel Petah Tikva, Kfar Sava today 14:30; Hapoel Beersheba v. Hapoel Ashkelon, Beersheba tomorrow 16:30; Ironi Rishon v. Maccabi Herzliya, Rishon today 14:30; Hapoel Haifa v. Hapoel Tel Aviv, Kiryat Eliezer tomorrow 17:00; Betar Jerusalem v. Hapoel Jerusalem, Teddy Stadium tomorrow 17:15; Maccabi Tel Aviv v. Maccabi Haifa, National Stadium, today 14:30; Ironi Ashdod v. Bnei Yehuda, Ashdod tomorrow 18:00; Maccabi Petah Tikva v. Hapoel Beit She'an, Petah Tikva today 14:30.

National League

	P	W	D	L	F	A	D	Pts
Betar Jerusalem	25	16	8	1	62	29	33	56
Hapoel Tel Aviv	25	17	5	3	30	11	19	56
Hapoel Haifa	25	13	9	3	48	23	25	48
Maccabi Haifa	25	13	6	6	42	28	14	45
Hapoel Petah Tikva	25	9	6	10	34	34	-	33
Ironi Ashdod	25	8	9	8	33	38	-5	33
Hapoel Kfar Sava	25	8	7	10	30	32	-2	31
Hapoel Jerusalem	25	7	10	8	30	34	-4	31
Ironi Rishon Lezion	25	8	6	11	32	38	-6	30
Ha. Petah Tikva	25	6	11	8	21	24	-3	29
Maccabi Herzliya	25	7	8	10	29	33	-4	29
Hapoel Beit She'an	25	7	7	11	27	37	-10	28
Maccabi Tel Aviv	25	6	9	10	27	30	-3	27
Hapoel Beersheba	25	5	8	12	30	49	-19	23
Bnei Yehuda	25	5	7	13	18	33	-15	22
Hapoel Ashkelon	25	4	6	15	19	39	-20	18

Becker's love affair with Wimbledon may not be over

BONN (Reuters) – Boris Becker's love affair with the fast grass of Wimbledon may not be over.

Last year the three-times champion made an emotional farewell to the grass court grand slam which suits his strong serve-and-volley game.

But now it appears there is a tiny chance he might return to the All England Club this year.

Becker said goodbye to Wimbledon last July, announcing after his quarter-final defeat to Pete Sampras that he would never play his favourite grand slam again.

But he appears to be having second thoughts.

"There is a 99 percent chance that I will not (play Wimbledon again)," the former world No. 1 was quoted as saying by sports magazine *Kicker* yesterday. "That leaves one percent." British newspapers reported yesterday that Becker has been telling friends that he may have been too hasty in making the decision not to play again at what he calls "the tournament that made me."

One factor, which is believed to have influenced him, was the sight of Czech Petr Korda winning the Australian Open in January at the age of 30.

Becker, who was appointed manager of the German Davis Cup team last October, keeps remaining vague about when he will end his playing career. Asked recently about his plans, the man who won Wimbledon in 1985, 1986 and 1989 said he only knew what his program would be for the next few weeks.

India smash records to beat Zimbabwe

CUTTACK, India (Reuters) – A one-day international record stand of 275 between skipper Mohammad Azharuddin and Ajay Jadeja set India up for a 32 run victory over Zimbabwe yesterday.

The unbeaten partnership in the latest triangular tournament match took India to 301-3 and although opener Grant Flower hit 102, Zimbabwe were bowled out in 48.4 overs for 269.

Azharuddin slammed an unbeaten 153 off 150 balls and Jadeja hit 116 off 121 after India lost three quick wickets within the first 10 overs with just 26 runs on the board.

The pair blasted an international one-day record for a partnership between two batsmen, earlier held by Pakistan's Aamir Sohail and Inzamam-Ul-Haq, who scored 263 for the second wicket in Sharjah against New Zealand in 1993/94.

The Indian batsmen also established a world record for the fourth wicket, beating South Africans Daryll Cullinan and Jonty Rhodes, who scored 232 against Pakistan at Nairobi in 1996/97.

The partnership is the highest in international matches but falls short of the 309 listed in Wisden for a domestic NatWest Trophy game between Worcestershire and Surrey at The Oval in 1994 when Tom Moody and Tim Curtis flayed the Surrey attack.

Azharuddin's knock included 17 fours and one six, while Jadeja's 116 had six fours and two sixes.

Azharuddin established a personal landmark, easily surpassing his highest one-day score of 111 not out.

Inside

Becker still dreaming of Wimbledon
Page 23

Sports Editors
Joe Hoffman & Ori Lewis

Celta Vigo turn down Barcelona bid for Revivo

MADRID (Reuters) – Celta Vigo said yesterday they had turned down a Barcelona bid for Israel international midfielder Haim Revivo.

The Galician club, who currently lie fifth in the Spanish first division, said Barcelona had offered 100 million pesetas ($649,000) plus the players Fernando Couto and Dragan Ciric in an exchange deal.

Former Barcelona director of soccer Bobby Robson has been a regular visitor to Celta matches in recent months to watch the player in action.

However Celta said they wanted to hold on to Revivo although he has a buy-out clause in his contract worth only 2,000 million pesetas ($13 million), well within the budget of Barcelona.

Revivo has scored seven goals for Celta this season and has been instrumental in their best league campaign since the 1970-71 season when they eventually finished sixth.

The offer of Couto as part of the deal for Revivo raises questions about the future of the Portuguese international at the Spanish league leaders.

Since the arrival of Dutch coach Louis van Gaal last year he has spent much of his time on the substitutes bench.

In January the 28-year-old defender, who has been capped 45 times, was widely reported to be set to leave the Catalan club and return to his native Portugal after being linked to a move to Benfica.

Young contender

Britain's Lee Westwood, 22, one of the players touted as a possible winner of the Masters watches his tee shot on the second hole at Augusta National yesterday. The first major of 1998 began 90 minutes late yesterday due to overnight rain which left the course waterlogged in many places. Paul Azinger was the early clubhouse leader after windy conditions made low scoring difficult. (Reuters)

Jazz beat Spurs 98-88, clinch Midwest Division

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) – With David Robinson out with a concussion caused by Karl Malone's inadvertent elbow, the Utah Jazz beat the San Antonio Spurs 98-88 Wednesday night to clinch the Midwest Division title for the second straight year.

Robinson was guarding Malone in the lane 2 1/2 minutes into the game when the Utah star took a pass from John Stockton and turned to the basket. Malone's elbow caught Robinson on the right side of the head and the San Antonio 7-footer dropped to the floor unconscious.

Robinson regained consciousness about 2 minutes later and was helped off the floor by trainers and doctors. He was taken to a hospital, where a CAT scan revealed no neurological damage beyond the concussion.

Malone scored 32 points for the Jazz, who moved a game in front of idle Seattle for the best record in the Western Conference.

Tim Duncan had 34 points for San Antonio, which is a half-game ahead of Phoenix for the fourth-best record in the West.

Knicks 83, Heat 80

In New York, Allan Houston scored 29 points, Chris Childs had his first productive game in weeks and the New York Knicks played tight defense to prevent Miami from attempting a final shot.

In a possible preview of a first-round playoff series, the Knicks showed some of the energy and heart they had been lacking lately while losing five of their previous six games.

New York stayed one game ahead of eighth-place New Jersey in the loss column and snapped a three-game losing streak that tied its longest of the season.

Alonzo Mourning recovered from a slow start and led Miami with 26 points.

Nets 117, Celtics 104

In Boston, Sam Cassell scored 29 points and Keith Van Horn had 24 points and 11 rebounds as the New Jersey Nets won their third straight game.

Antoine Walker led the Celtics with 43 points, but he missed two free throws with 4:57 left and the Nets leading 97-93. Chris Gatling followed with two layups as the Nets went on a 10-2 run that gave them a 107-95 lead with 3:08 to play.

See NBA, Page 23

Maccabi TA lifts State Cup

Overcomes Hapoel Galil Elyon 83-70 in final

By BRIAN FREEMAN

Maccabi Tel Aviv stayed on course for its first double in four seasons last night after capturing the State Cup for the first time since 1994 with an 83-70 win over Hapoel Galil Elyon in the final at Yad Eliahu.

Doron Sheffer scored 32 points on 8-9 shooting from three-point range and overall 83 percent accuracy from the field to lead Maccabi to its 28th State Cup, although only its second in the past seven years.

Galil fought hard the entire night, even when it fell behind by 18 points midway through the second half and had no realistic chance of a comeback, but had few answers to Sheffer's long-range shooting.

The evening opened as if Galil, which lost both contests to Tel Aviv during the regular season, might add another chapter to Maccabi's State Cup jinx, racing off to a 6-2 lead and holding the advantage as late as six minutes into the half.

Galil was tenacious on the boards at both ends of the court, enabling several second-chance opportunities, but sub-par shooting and four missed free-throws by Ron Carey prevented the northerners from building up a bigger advantage.

That came back to haunt Galil when with just under 14 minutes remaining in the period Sheffer connected on the first of what what was to be seven consecutive three pointers, including five in the first half.

Despite Maccabi hitting on 8 of 13 three-pointers in the half and Galil connecting on only 1 of 4, Hapoel was able to go into the locker room down only 45-36.

Maccabi looked ready to put on a rout when it scored two quick buckets in the first minute of the second half to open up a 13-point lead, but Galil responded with a 10-2 run to cut the advantage to 51-46 and also had possession of the ball with 16 minutes to play.

But just as suddenly as Galil appeared to be making a game out of it, Sheffer hit the bottom of the net for his first three pointer of the second half to start a 17-3 Maccabi run over the next six minutes which effectively closed out the contest.

During that run, any chance Galil had of a comeback was dealt a serious blow when national team player Gur Shelef fouled out with 13:35 left on the game clock.

Ironically for a club so used to winning almost everything on a local level, this was the first State Cup title for every Tel Aviv player in a Maccabi uniform, except for Nadav Henefeld, although both Sheffer and Brad Leaf had won the cup with Galil, which captured the title in 1988 and 1992.

For Galil, which beat Maccabi in the 1993 league playoffs and captured the only league championship in the past 28 years which Maccabi has not won, the defeat marked the third time (1987, 1990) it has fallen to Tel Aviv in the State Cup final.

For Maccabi, Sheffer had 32 points, Borko Radovic 18, Oded Katash 12, Rashard Griffith 7, Henefeld 6, Randy White and Constantin Popa 3 and Leaf 2.

For Galil, Kennedy had 25 points, while Erez Hazan had 12, Carey and Shelef 9, Alon Stein 6, Mark Carver 4, Alon Stein and Oren Amiel 3 and Ido Kuzicro 2.

Maccabi and Galil now both return to playoff action in the race for the league championship, where Maccabi holds a 1-0 advantage in its best-of five quarterfinal series against Maccabi Ramat Gan, while Galil is a game down to Hapoel Jerusalem.

Israel to host France in Davis Cup

By ORI LEWIS

Israel were yesterday drawn to host France in the Davis Cup World Group qualifying round tie which will likely be held at Ramat Hasharon next September.

The young Israeli side earned their berth in the qualifying tie to be played on the weekend of September 25-27 after sweeping to a 4-1 win over Austria last weekend.

With their superior ranking, the French will be hot favorites to win the tie and retain their World Group spot next year. But team captain Shlomo Glickstein sounded fairly happy with the result "We could easily have got a tougher draw as there are many better teams playing this round," he said.

The draw held at the ITF's headquarters in London yesterday saw the eight first-round losers in last weekend's World Group ties and the eight zonal winners drawn, with eight nations seeded against eight other teams. With team player rankings taken into consideration, Israel was one of the unseeded nations.

France has four very highly ranked players, including Cedric Pioline, last year's Wimbledon and US Open finalist who is No. 14 in the ATP Tour rankings.

The other three players currently in the top 40 are Fabrice Santoro (25), Nicolas Escude (39) and Guillaume Raoux (40). Altogether there are seven French players in the world's top 100.

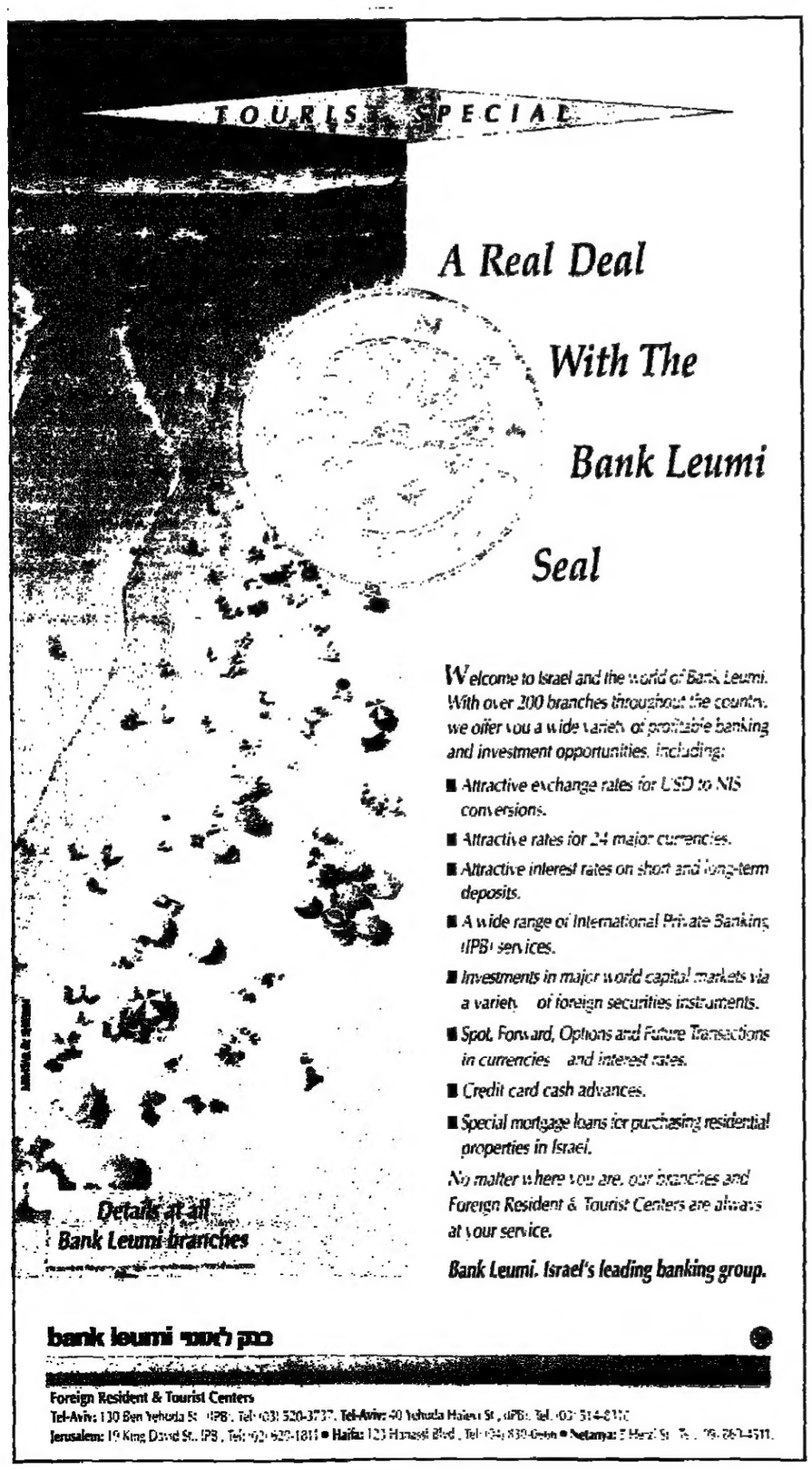
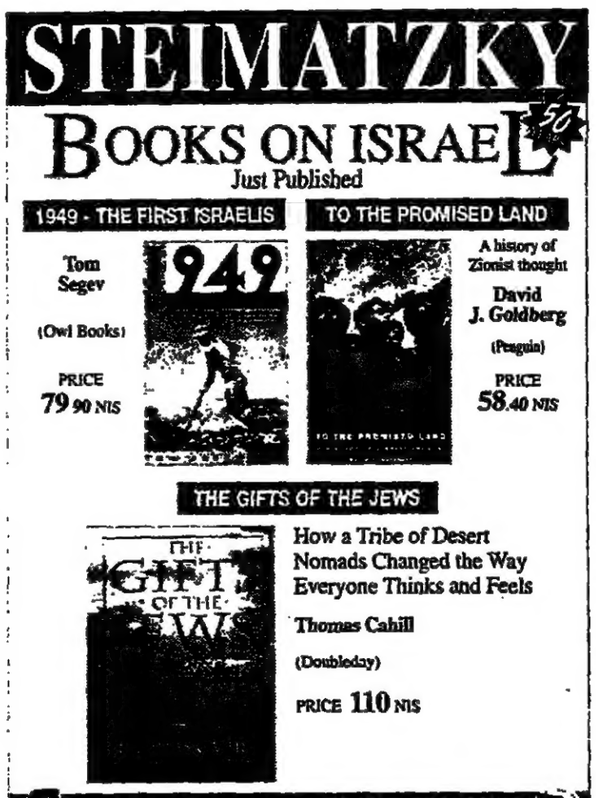
Israel, by comparison, has no players ranked in the top 100. The highest placed Israeli is Eyal Erlich, who is 176. Next are Eyal Ran (214), Noam Behr (246), then come veterans Oren Motevassel (260) and Raviv Weidenfeld (270), followed by the fourth team member from last week's victory over Austria, Amir Hadad (271).

The odds clearly favor the visitors, but Glickstein was also happy about the home advantage. "The fact that this is a home tie is good for us in many ways. All in all, this is a reasonable outcome and it is not impossible (for us to win)," the Israeli captain said yesterday.

Israel has played France on two previous occasions; both were World Group ties when both teams were probably their most powerful ever.

In 1989 Israel were the hosts at Yad Eliahu when Amos Mansdorf and Gilad Bloom faced Yanick Noah and Henri Leconte in the singles and Mansdorf and Shahar Perkis played Noah and Guy Forget in the doubles. The French came away comfortable 4-1 winners on the indoor carpet surface.

In 1991 France, the eventual cup winners that year, hosted Israel in Rennes on an indoor clay surface and Leconte and Forget had little difficulty in winning 5-0 against Mansdorf and Bloom.

In all, France have won the Davis Cup eight times, with two of those wins coming in recent years. In 1991 they beat the US 3-1 in the final in Lyon and in 1996 they came back from Malmo with a 3-2 shock win over Sweden.

Draw for the Davis Cup World Group qualifying round made yesterday (x denotes seeding): x-Australia v Uzbekistan, x-Brazil v Romania, x-Czech Republic v South Africa, Israel v x-France, x-Britain v India, x-Netherlands v Ecuador, Japan v x-Russia, Argentina v x-Slovakia.